Makati Business Club wants Comelec execs to quit

FPJ citizenship issue still valid, says Drilon

By Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet L. Javellana and Marvin P. Mo'o

Hold those punches: no more photo ops

By Clarissa V. Siguerra

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Archives chief shelved

President distances self from Manapat

By Ed Catacutan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday fired National Archives Director Ricardo Manapat, immediately distancing herself from the man at the center of the disgraceful Roxas controversy involving opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Ms Macapagal announced the appointment of Maricris S. Cleto, a senior officer at the archives, as officer in charge even before Malacañang had obtained a copy of Manapat's application for an indefinite leave of absence.

Three archives employees invoked at Wednesday's Senate hearing that Manapat had ordered them to forge evidence against Poe.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye explained Ms Macapagal's unusual haste in tackling Manapat: "It's very important that we preserve the reputation, the integrity of the office, and I believe at this point the appointment of an OIC is warranted, justified and called for."

But Manapat, in a press briefing he called belated, said "powerful forces" were behind the smear campaign against him. He said these forces, which he did not identify, were not to protect Poe.

"It's a matter of personal honor. I am hereby voluntarily going on leave as director of the National Archives to restore the institution I have faithfully served and dispel any notion that I will in any way use this office to defend myself and otherwise undermine and compromise any investigations that under the circumstances will surely ensue," Manapat said.

He also said he unleashed the charges that would be filed against him, because this would give him the chance to "debunk" the allegations.

Asked why he did not resign from his position altogether, Manapat said it was because he was "not guilty."

(BOTH STORIES A-4)

GOOD LUCK WELCOME HERE. A dragon-costumed performer at the Philippine Stock Exchange signifies good luck through the Chinese Year of the Monkey. And the PSE certainly could use a lot of luck. Its composite index close on Thursday at 1,239.29 points to 1,260.45. Market shares barely changed as earlier gains were offset by last-minute profit-taking in select stock such as Pilnet, dealers said. —AP

WHO'S Manapat, and why are they saying those things about him?

Who is Ricardo Manapat?

By Michael Lim Ubac, Fe Zamora, Jing-Jing Sai and Norman Bordadora

RICARDO Manapat, National Archives director on indefinite leave, is known to come up with documents that stir controversy.

He soon showed to the anti-Marcos movement when he wrote the book "Some Are Smarter than Others," which documented how then dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his cronies looted the country.

The book came out in 1991, but it was an expanded and updated version of the now classic 80-page pamphlet he wrote in 1979.

Pointer Jiro Bocaya "Bimpy" Asunto Jr., while interviewed in Fort Bonifacio, described the pamphlet as the "most explosive document to have surfaced thusly."

The book also chronicled how privileges and wealth were accorded to a few individuals identified with the dictatorship.

Despite the extensive research done by Manapat, few believed the veracity of the details contained in the pamphlet at the time. After Marcos was ousted in 1986, however, the pamphlet vindicated in the government's effort to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies.

Manapat spent 11 years completing the book. When the pamphlet was published, Manapat was harassed and persecuted by the

(STORY IN A-4)

'My wife is a fighter, I know she will survive'

EDU, 1977 can be proud that many engineers could secure jobs and landed lucrative in hobby as mercenaries.

Myrtle Cera, 31, the only woman in the mainly Filipino crew of the capsized cargo ship, MS Sunbeam, had left her job as an assistant accounting officer of Aboitiz Marine in Manila, which she had held for five years.

She was in Germany for a two-month assignment when the Sunbeam docked last December, and she joined the crew as a senior woman.

The Sunbeam capsized in the icy waters of the fjaune fjord off the southwest coast of Norway

(STORY IN A-4)

Court orders transfer of $684-M Marcos loot to gov't

By Armando N. Nocum

THE HIGHEST of the Sandiganbayan has ordered to never-before-seen order for the Philippine Government $684 million of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' ill-gotten wealth.

The first division of the Sandiganbayan issued yesterday the writ of execution for Sandiganbayan Chief Sheriff Gil Lopez to demand the transfer of the funds, which have been held in an escrow account in the Philippines.

"You are hereby ordered to enforce the decision of the SC and cause the immediate transfer or the Republic of the Philippines the forms deposits which were transferred and are now deposited in escrow at the PNB," the Sandiganbayan said, referring to Clarita.

The issuance of the writ was in compliance with the Dec. 9 resolution of the Supreme Court for the "immediate execution" of the transfer of the funds to the government.

Clarita said in a telephone interview that lawyers of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) would accompany him in serving the writ at the PNB head office on Ayala Boulevard in Ermita City.

He said he would give the bank until early next week to make the transfer. The funds are mostly in secured in stocks, bonds and other investment instruments abroad.

The Supreme Court ruled last November that Marcos had illegally accumulated the mon

(STORY IN A-4)

Sulu-Sulawesi fate tied to its corals, whales, turtles

WORLD's richest area for marine life lay 'mouth a patch of the Sulu Sea off northeast Borneo its plants, shore and fishes, in Malaysia's Lankayan Island | But nearby the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia, the underwater variety are under constant threats from piracy, tourist kidnappings and bare fishing

HOME to over 41 million inhabitants of unique, irreplaceable sea creatures, the Sulu-Sulawesi marine ecoregion is in urgent need of protection.

Fish catch down, tribe looks up

By Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Cynthia D. Rubio

BOROKAWAE, Bulacan—Ito three things to pray for peace, orderly elections and rain.

Members of the Dumagat tribe have started already. They chanted and held evening prayers on a mountain near the Sierra Madre range asking their gods for rain.

The Dumagats have reported a dwindling fish catch in the lakes within the Angat watershed. Rodolfo Dimal, one of the leaders of the tribe, said that since the lakes in Angat had dried up, there was less fish to catch.

Fishing remains the main source of livelihood for the Dumagats. They sell their catch in the Cities

(STORY IN A-4)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

Business wants Abalos out

P1 budget staring DOTC in the eye

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SUNSHINE your department will get.

This is what the Senate yesterday told the Department of Transportation and Communications after DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza failed to first secure clearance from the budget agency the lawmakers had wanted to audit.

During budget deliberations last night, the Senate suspended for the second time its consideration of the proposed P91.3-billion DOTC budget for 2004.

The senators said that as long as Alberto Lim, a proponent of an "open door" policy at seaports, is retained in office as a director of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), whether under the DOTC, the Senate would block passage of the department's budget.

The legislators were led by Senate President Franklin Drilon and included Senate Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III and Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Manuel Villar, Ralph Recto and Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"As of now, both sides (administration and opposition senators) are in agreement that the DOTC budget should be suspended," Drilon said.

Should Mendoza continue to defy the senators, the chamber could opt to prune the DOTC a one-peso budget as soon as it acts on the passage of the national budget, or the General Appropriations Act of 2004, he said.

Lim is an official not co-terminous of "open door," which is being pushed by the US Agency for International Development-funded Accelerated Growth, Investments and Liberalization with Equity (Agile) lobby group.

Agile agents are believed to have assisted their men into sensitive government offices, including the Department of Finance and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, in order to influence national policy in favor of the United States.

Aside from the Agile issue, Drilon took the DOTC to task for the "unauthorized" purchase for P800 million of two new vessels from shipmaker for the Philippine Coast Guard.

Drilon wondered where the department managed to get the funds for the purchase, pointing out that DOTC officials could have realized malversation charges since Congress did not approve any funding for the acquisition of the vessels.

"We are looking at some Gabby here for possible malversation, malfeasance, that is why we want DOTC to explain this before we even consider their 2004 budget," he said.

Senaya said reporters he had wanted Mendoza to act on the matter next week Lim, "as an asset, to unpark the DOTC budget."

THE COUNTRY'S most influential businessmen yesterday rallied for the ouster of Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco.

They were necessary to preserve the credibility of the commission, after holding it against idea were found to the swindling of a solution to nominate the May 10 polls, according to the Makati Business Club. Under the Constitution, Comelec commissioners can be removed only by impeachment.

Last week, the Supreme Court voided the P1.3-billion contract won by Mega Pacific eSolutions, a primary consortium, in computerizing Philippine elections for the first time. It stated a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for implementation, the winners would have been limited within 30 hours of balloting. Aside from the presidency, the elections will use 11 of the 24 senate seats contested, as well as those of governor, mayor and other local positions.

In a statement, the MBC said: "The Supreme Court's decision calls in question the fitness or legality of the (Comelec) in its conduct of related processes leading up to the elections. It would be difficult for the public to have faith that elections will be clean, honest, orderly and fair."

The businessmen said Abalos and Tancangco—who heads the first (unlimited) and third (nonpartisan) phases of the three-part program like second phase was the one looted by the SC—clearly did not seek expert opinion from information technology professionals on how to effectively implement computerization.

Despite repeated calls from the private sector, they said, Abalos also failed to regularly convene a panel of experts to check on the progress of the project.

Parallel move

A parallel move by opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel was shot down by administration yesterday as a move bid for media mileage.

Pimentel, a redistricter, filed graft charges on Wednesday against Abalos and all six other commissioners in connection with the Mega-Pacific contract.

Senate Majority Floor Leader Sergio Osmeña III (Cebu, Nacionalista) cited a 15-year-old legal doctrine that says impeachable officials, including Comelec commissioners, should be impeached before they could be charged in the Sandiganbayan.

If Pimentel's suit, Gonzales said: "Signal lang 'yan (just trying to look good). It's a futile attempt to get senate-named media attention."

Gonzales, a lawyer, also reminded the senator that initiating impeachment proceedings was a job of the House of Representatives. Besides, he said, Pimentel's complaint was "premature, because the Supreme Court has not issued a final ruling."

While the high court invalidated the contract, the Comelec has announced its intent to file a motion for reconsideration.

Gonzales recalled a 1988 case where then Sandiganbayan Raul Gonzalez sought the dismissal of a justice of the Supreme Court. Gonzalez said the high court ruled at the time that disbarment proceedings could not proceed without first impeaching the respondent.

Pimentel filed the graft charges before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Rep. Rolene Ann Barbers (Lakas, Parigue del Norte) indicted that Pimentel "should have waited for the final ruling of the Supreme Court."

"The senator was 'nerong,'" said Rep. Bernadeng Macaraeg Jr. (NPC, Lanao del Sur).

Rep. Florencio Abad (LP, Batanes) said, "It will be interesting to see how the Ombudsman will deal with it."

Ombudsman officials earlier noted that most commissioners were impeachable officials, graft investigators could only go after lower ranking Comelec personnel. Carlito Pablo, with AFP

GMA cancels HK trip on doc's advice

MALACAÑANG yesterday announced a last-minute cancellation of a controversial overnight trip to Hong Kong by President Macapagal-Arroyo to allow the President to rest and meet with some Chinese-Filipino businessmen, migrant workers and members of the El Shaddai Catholic charismatic group.

Earlier, Malacañang canceled the overnight trip of the trip by private media.

Late yesterday afternoon, Press Secretary Milton Alingod announced that the trip had been scrapped altogether.

"The President is not feeling well. She's tired of under the weather," Alingod said.

The last doctor's advice, the President has to take her second last trip to Hong Kong," said presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

The President was set to leave this afternoon by private jet for an overnight visit. She was expected to return home late tonight.

Alingod said the President's scheduled engagements for today have also been canceled, including an interview with the GMA-7 new show "Ito-Dato," which features the presidential candidates for next May's elections.

Alingod denied that the controversy involving the alleged appointment of Hermogenes Esperon to the chairmanship of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. to the board of the National Archives prompted the cancellation of the Hong Kong trip.

He said the canceled trip was "normal," adding that the Macapagal's presidential daily schedule could make anyone sick.

Even before the trip was canceled, Malacañang did not intend the itinerary for the President's Hong Kong trip.

But there were speculations that it was campaign-related. Sources said the President's main reason for going to Hong Kong was to attend a gathering of Hong Kong-based El Shaddai members.

The Catholic charismatic group, led by Rev. Mike Velarde, is reputed to politicians become it reportedly has several million members.

Bunye only gave a general idea of what the President was supposed to do in Hong Kong. Juliet Labog-Javellana

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Gov't set to take over Terminal 3

By D.C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

THE GOVERNMENT is preparing to take over operations at the multimillion-dollar Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after the Pasay court ruling that built it was stopped at its lame duck by the Supreme Court, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has told the transportation department to "prepare a blueprint" for a takeover so she wants the terminal to open as soon as possible, Bunye told a news conference.

"We have been waiting for the final resolution of this case by the SC. It's clear that the opening of Terminal 3 will come earlier. The President has long expressed her desire to see the terminal open soon," Bunye said.

Blueprint for takeover

He said a government committee composed of the secretaries of trade, tourism and transportation departments will be preparing the blueprint for the takeover.

He doubted Pasay could still succeed in changing the SC's mind with a second motion for reconsideration as the day high court "frowns on second motions."

"The decision signals the inalienable supremacy of good governance. This is a victory of the average Filipino who is fighting for change in the political system," Bunye said.

The MIAA-million contract to build and operate Terminal 3 was awarded to Philippine International the Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco), which is majority-owned by the Germany-based JP-based AG with its Filipino partners, the Cheng family. It was awarded during the previous Estrada administration.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday affirmed a May 2003 ruling voiding the Piatco deal, citing irregularities in the bidding and concession provisions of the contract.

The terminal, designed to handle 15 million passengers yearly and have passenger outfits at two older terminals, was originally due to open late in 2002.

Piatco has said it stands to lose about P429 billion in investments from the project, and has sought arbitration from the World Bank to force the government to compensate it.

Bunye declined to answer how the government intended to address the arbitration case filed by Piatco, saying a legal issue was still studying it.

He said the general effect of the decision is to hasten the eventual takeover and operation of the terminal.

Far from being disheartened by the SC decision, Piatco shareholders yesterday said they actually welcomed the ruling as it categorically allowed to the government the duty to pay the company before taking over the project.

"The SC decision says they [the government] should pay first before taking over. If they take over without compensating us, we will go to the SC," said businessman Jose Oscar Alvarez. Piatco's point man in the negotiations for just compensation with the government.

Piatco lawyer Paula Chaney said that if the SC were to disallow a second motion for reconsideration, Piatco will hail an Option B which he said was easier.

"It's as silent to stop the government from taking over Mata Nasa we are going to name the government of the Republic of the Philippines as a respondent in the case," Chaney said.

He said the second motion for reconsideration should be allowed by the SC, as it did in the court in first by look at the Wet Amani land deal.

"The Supreme Court applied one set of standards of last five Piatco, and another set of standards for the Amani and Amoroso cases," said Chaney.

July opening of Naia 3 seen

THE STATE-OF-THE-ART Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 could be operating as early as July as a result of the Supreme Court's final ruling against the Piatco consortium that built it.

"We only need to build the internal access roads and other support facilities," airport general manager Edgardo Pacada said in an interview on dzMM radio.

Pacada, who expressed elation over the Supreme Court decision, said the Manila International Airport Authority has enough funds to operate Mia.

But MIAA site operations Mia 1 and 2, which caters to international flights, as well as the Manila Domestic Airport and the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, Pampanga.

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3 RP pet events in SEAG calendar

Bowling, golf, dancesport make it over football, badminton, t'tennis

By Mon Anthony Reyes

BOWLING, golf and dancesport, events where the Filipinos are traditionally strong, made it among the 22 sports that the Philippine Olympic Committee executive council will recommend as "must" competitions in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games the country will host next.

The roster of events, which was compiled by the Philsea (Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee) technical body led by former PSC commissioner Richie Garcia, will be submitted for approval to the 40-member POC general assembly on Wednesday.

"The list was based on the country's gold-winning chances," said POC secretary-general Bones Iñiguez, adding that the committee based its study from the country's 1981 hosting of the SEAG when the Philippines had the overall championship by a single gold to Indonesia, 55-54.

After the competition roster is approved by the POC general assembly, the list will be presented to the SEA Games Federation during a meeting scheduled in Manila this March.

Iñiguez said the 10 other member countries are expected to recommend about 10 more sports to be added to the 2005 calendar of events.

Football, badminton and table tennis, which were left out of the regular roster in favor of bowling, golf and the new events of dancesport, are sure to be reinstated during the SEAG Federation meeting.

"Whatever happens, these sports (football, badminton and table tennis) will be included because other countries will try to lobby for them," Iñiguez told the Inquirer.

Football is the centerpiece event in the SEAG, while badminton and table tennis found of world-class players from Indonesia and Malaysia.

The Filipinos are weakest in all three events, however.

"It's part of our strategy as host," said Iñiguez of the juggling of events done as assessment to every SEAG organizing country.

Iñiguez said the SEAs making it to the 2005 calendar (except for athletics and aquatics) could put up events that will exceed five percent of the total gold medals at stake.

Aces sign up Fil-Aussie, 2 other rookies

By Jane Navarro

WITH John Arigo now happy with a new multimillion contract, Alaska signed on yesterday three of its four rookie draftees to complete the local roster of the team for the PBA/Stanhome Conference next month.

Team manager Angel Tello said rookies Joaquin Gamin Thon, Willie Wilson and Ronnan Ponce were given contracts commensurate to their status in the recent rookie draft.

Wilson, selected fifth overall by the Aces, inked a P5.4-million pact for 2 1/2 years, making the 6-foot-7 Filipino-Australian the first first-rounder to secure a contract.

Picked by the Aces in the second round,

(CONTINUED)

Welcoat up, Fash down in PBL Cup

THE GAMES had no bearing but Welcoat played true to form while Fash Liquid experimented with different combinations and lost at the Pasig Sports Center yesterday.

The Paint Masters asserted themselves in the second half and downed Fashion OIL 74-62, while the Liquid Power dropped a 70-68 decision to Phi Star Chemicals.

Welcoat and Fash had already sealed a tiebreaker for the PBL Phoinikas Cup and both teams will be doing no more than a workout

STANDINGS	W	L
Welcoat	12	4
Fash Liquid	11	5
Phi Star	9	7
Fashion	8	8

when they meet just to complete the two-round semifinal schedule tomorrow.

The Paint Masters raised their leading record to 13-4, still Fash dropping to 11-5. Phi Star stood at 9-6 and Fashion was 8-9-1.

Left unrecorded in the detailed box following a loss by Fash's Mike Gelig, Ronald Dacoul lost the final buzzer to an assist by Allen Gardon to lift the Evergreen Kings to victory and snap the Liquid Power's seven-game winning streak.

Fash started strong, taking a 29-9 lead at the end of the first quarter, with Pete Jose Simon scoring 12 points.

Quarter scores:

FASHION

MIS STAR 70—Cruz 2 Cadiz 10, Nazzal 12, Alvarez 12, Jose L. Jose I, Abuna 4, Valencia 2, Lopez 4, Gardon 2, Jacinto 2, Ona 2; Manalo 1, Cruz 0

WELCOAT 74—Rivera 20, Gonzales 7, Gelig 6, Estrepanya 8, Mendoza 2, Jose S, Abuna 4, Abuna 4, Ja-2, Jose I, Gozon 0, Mercado 0, Bagtol

Quarters: 15-9, 23-23, 51-41, 70-62

POWER. Playing (left) of Welcoat Pointe and Jerwel Vizcarra of Fashion (237 fight) for the rebound in yesterday's game. ALEX BADAYOS

Knights stay unbeaten

NCAA titlist La Salle subdued Archbishop Stone-ridge, 75-68, yesterday as part its unbeaten run tonight victory in the Metro Manila elimination of the National Inter Collegiate Championship at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Reigns Emilio rejoiced with 21 points for the Knights. Lesnar downed Mid Computer Universing 68-47, in the inaugurals on Sunday.

Trinity stunned San Sebastian, 87-74, in the consolation evening as a qualifier for the National Students finals set March 1-7 in Lucena City.

Skins Game precedes RP Open

A SKINS Game possibly featuring Frankie Minoza and Jennifer Rosales, among others, will kick off the 18th Philippine Open Golf Championship on Feb. 28-29 at the Mimosa Golf and Country Club in Clark Field, Pampanga.

Cleveland, the country's leader in pastry delights, has expressed interest in helping handicraft the million-peso event with other one of two guest occupation deep into golf.

Also involved to join the Skins Game are Ria Quinsaya, former medalist in the Asian Junior Games; 2001 RP Open champion Rich Gibson and former PBA Athlete of the Year awardee Dennis Orcollo.

"I welcome Cleveland's robust support for the country's premier golf event by taking the initial step toward this first ever Skins Game in the RP Open," said Raul Ilek, manager, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines.

The Skins Game is tentatively set on Feb. 24.

Ateneo, La Salle renew cage rivalry

ATENEO Blue Eagles and La Salle's Green Archers renew their rivalry tomorrow when they clash in the featured match of the Red Bull-sponsored Jaki Player Cup basketball tournament at the Ilan Bella gym.

The Eagles and the Archers clash at 5:00 p.m. in the tourney organized by Mirabel's Green Innovations and sponsored by Red Bull and Jaki Cokies.

Reigning UAAP titlist Far Eastern Univ's Iron Birds (Red) at 2:30 while NCAA kingpin Letran battles San Beda (White) 1-0 4 p.m.

Over at the 1982 gym, FEU battles UP at 9 a.m. and UST tackles National University at 10:30.

Powered by Ryan Arabia and Jose Aquino, the Archers whipped UPIS 81-49, recently to boost their record to 3-1.

Ateneo's 8-man squad (6'0, 73-70), to level its one-for-2:20 to Group B.

In other matches, the Knights downed PCU, 72-66; Adamson stopped San Beda, 65-56; PCU, 78 whipped San Sebastian, 83-77; UP spilled NU, 83-53; and Mapua downed San Beda, 60-53.

FEU and Adamson draw the Group A lead with 3-0 marks.

Doves wallop Jaguars, on target for 5th title

THE ST. Francis of Assisi College Doves handily outlasted Swiss Jaguars as they overpowered the Philippine School of Business Administration Jaguars, 98-62, in Game 1 of the NCRAA men's basketball finals at the Pasay Sports Complex.

AJ Wagner tied the league record of seven triples and matched the 21-point output of Randel de Ocampo as the Doves crowned within a win of a title-hitting their fifth straight title.

Story was presented by Welcoat Paints from repairing the Doves to countenance on the Swiss Masters' PBL campaign.

Cornelio Dela La Salle, 36-43, in the women's finals and San Sebastian-Cavite topped Colegio de San Lorenzo, 67-61, for the juniors' title.

Aces sign up Fil-Aussie . . .

From page one

Wilson agreed to a P5.2 million contract also for 2 1/2 years while Francis, a third-rounder, signed up for a P1 million for 1 1/2 years.

Tolbe and Thoss would receive the maximum rookie salary of P350,000 for 18 months, with a corresponding 50 percent increase in the final year of his contract that would give the former Cook University alum a P525,000 monthly pay.

Wilson will earn P1,00,000 0.5% for 24 months and P1,20,000 in the last year of the pact while the 6-foot-4 Nelson is expected to get P60,000 for the entire 1 1/2-year stretch.

Wilson, a former star of La Salle, and Penaco, the Philippine Christian University's one reliable shooter, will fill the void left by Rafael Del Rosario and Jeffrey Cariaso.

Del Rosario, Noble, Alex Cuntapay and Jun Dionisio joined the team several hour ago after the Aces waived their contracts. Noble last was signed up by Sarangay Chubbies.

Balladares-Chavez tops Taal hobie regatta

HOBIE Balladares and crewman Samuel Chavez of the Philippine Navy showed their world-class sailing skills to rule the national category for the second straight year in the Hobie One Philippine 1-0-One National Championships at the Taal Lake Yacht Club (TLYC) over the weekend.

Also bagging the spotlight in the two-day regatta around the Olympic style course were Jerry Rosario and Janet McCullough who topped the Masters division and Jun Villanueva and Nestor Serrano who won the Grand titles.

Asian champion Tong Shing of Hong Kong teamed up with foreigners Lee to rule the Open category of the event which also served as the prelude to next month's Philippine-Hobie Challenge.

"The race was a great success because of the large fleet and the strong competition," said Villanueva of the sponsoring Mercurio enterprises.

World Slasher Cup finals today

THE CHAMPIONSHIP round of the World Slasher Cup II Cockfighting derby gets underway at 12 noon today at the Araneta Coliseum with more than 100 fights on Day Derby hosts Jorge "Boss" Araneta, Gov. Ito Plaza and the Pasig Group said the three-day cockfighting spectacle have more than 70,000 packing on hand in the first two days. Fifty-four survivors from a field of 128 entries will fight it out tomorrow's 4-cock finals. Winning the Second Stallion will be entries of Sandeep Corporation and Bulls Missouri Government Edition over Government Edition 90. Big Dove versus Mon Rosada of Thunderbird Derby Hatchet, Rep. Rudy Ja-vera of Malabon, Mel Mingo, Pet Delvigado and Dicky Lim of Golden Circle (1-3) and 3 Star Paying Corporation of Sal Gregor and company.

PCC hosts 3-cock derby

MULTIPLE matches are expected at the Pasay City Cockpit tonight with the staging of a special 3-cock derby sponsored by Sagupaan Corporation 2000. Sagupaan Mike Inte, Sagupaan Warriors and Sagupaan Hi-Hit Fortes (5 slots in a cash prize of P1,00,000, with the entry fee pegged at P5,000, cash basis Bull, Derby and Chicken-breeds (No-color—weighing between 1.8 kg and 2.4 kg—must be submitted from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. today. Forfeitures, 1st (P50-1000) 2nd (P40-1,000) and 3rd (P30-800). And the 4-cock derby starts next Friday with the 1st (P30 Gamay as host and cash prizes totaling P100,000 solely for P10,000 a slot.

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The 'Boss' for 'Da King'?

By Carlos Conde

THE "BOSS" to take the place of "Da King"?

A maverick administration legislator yesterday suggested that businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. can substitute for opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. if the latter ends up being disqualified from running if it should be proven that he is not a natural-born Filipino.

Rep. Jacinto Ilano Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrat representative for Negros Occidental, noted that Cojuangco, known as the "Boss" to his political followers, would be acceptable to the range of both pro- and anti-Arroyo forces.

Ilano said Cojuangco will get the votes of Poe supporters that if Cojuangco does not run in Poe's opposition stronghold Lanao del Norte, where Cojuangco's political influence is strong.

If the opposition wants to get a formidable candidate to replace FPJ, they should get Danding — Poe's campaign spokesman, Ilano said.

"If Danding decides to run, it will be good for the country because as a matter of fact, he has the capability to unite the country around," said Ilano who ran for his reelection bid in 2001 as Mindanao's lone Cojuangco candidate in the election running.

Asked whom he would support if Cojuangco opted not to consider his decision to run, Ilano said: "I will be caught between two lovers."

"If FPJ stands as the candidate of the opposition, assuming he's not disqualified, then I will stand with FPJ," he said.

8 to be deported for human traffic

AUTHORITIES arrested two Bangsamoro and six Chinese nationals at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on suspicion of human trafficking and will deport them soon, officials said Thursday.

Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said the two Bangsamoro allegedly planned to smuggle the Chinese nationals into the United States using fake Singaporean passports. They were arrested Dec. 31.

Immigration Prosecutor Mario Antonio said the Bangsamoro were charged with violating the conditions of their stay and for being cloaked with aliens, while the six Chinese were charged with using false documents.

Officials said the eight arrived at Manila on two separate flights from Bangkok, Thailand, on Dec. 27, before booking their onward flights to the United States.

Authorities became suspicious about their upcoming flights because they had authorized six of the arrivals in Manila that they would return to Bangkok.

When questioned, the Chinese nationals reportedly admitted that the Bangsamoro were trying to smuggle them into America.

The immigration bureau said the eight will be deported soon, and banned them from returning the country.

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"FRAUDULENT"

DENR cancels forestry contract

By Yvi Gonzales

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources has canceled a big reforestation contract in Quezon province that had been approved by former Secretary Heherson Alvarez in November 2003.

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun said "fraud, misrepresentation and violations of material law" pervaded the process in which the DENR granted the forest management contract involving 24,000 hectares in General Nakar town.

In an order signed on Jan. 13, Gozun revoked the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) that Alvarez entered in favor of Timberland Forest Products Inc. on Nov. 13, 2003. Alvarez was replaced in DENR chief about a month later by a Cabinet member.

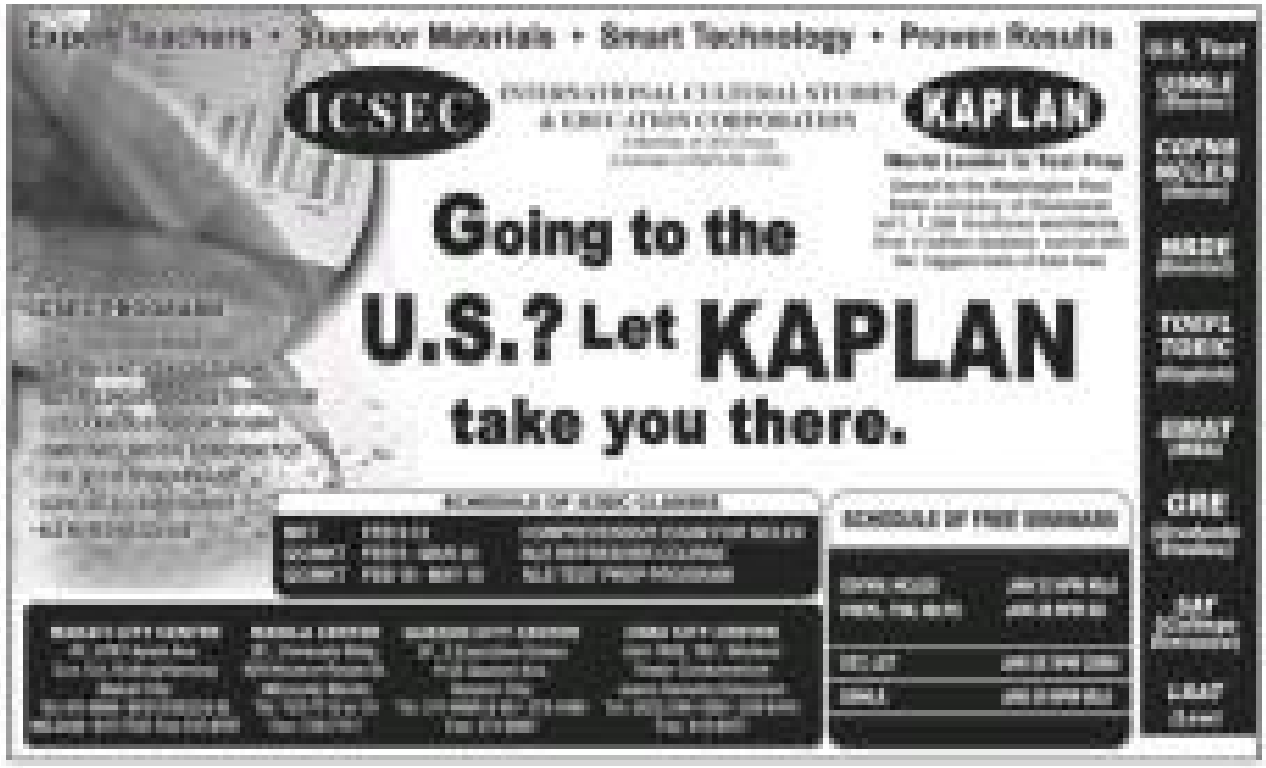
An IFMA is an agreement between the government and the private sector to develop and manage tree plantations. An IFMA holder is entitled to harvest mature trees and processed forest products in a sustainable manner.

Three weeks after its approval, Timberland's IFMA was questioned by a hiking organization—Pacific Coast Agri-Business Development Corp. headed by its president, Art Garcia. In 2003, the IFMA lost the exclusive use of the National Power Corporation (Napocor)-owned property to Garcia and three persons from an indigenous people's organization.

Rachel Tor Cortes, Alyansi yesterday said Alvarez "backdoor awards of industrial orders for timber exceed the limit. I asked many questions...and Alvarez took an inordinate amount of time."

Gozun said Alvarez's approval of DENR chief of always order that contracts undergo "scrutiny" before he would sign them.

Alliance Secretary Cortes, he said in Filipino: "Those who had the ordered are looking to jeopardize that. But if you look at the contract, the ground concepts of reforestation. Even ecosystems were upheld. They should look at the general picture because I don't think that will fail in evening."



PNP disowns cop chiefs' gripes vs Napolcom

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday distanced itself from the call made by a group of active and retired senior officials for the abolition of the National Police Commission (Napolcom).

Former Supt. Ariel Codilan, police information officer, said the position of the Association of Chiefs of Police of the Philippine Inc. (ACPPI) "does not reflect what will the PNP organization."

"They have the right to air their grievances," Codilan said. regardless. "But let's see if they are valid."

He said the call for Napolcom's abolition due to its alleged "micromanagement" of the PNP may have just been the personal opinion of ACPPI chair Guillermo Sumodon, a retired general.

In the first place, the ACPPI is independent of the PNP, Codilan said.

It is headed, however, by top active PNP officers—Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. is chair emeritus, while Director Eduardo de Leon, National Capital Region Police Office chief, is president.

Domondon had said on Wednesday that it was "natural" for senior officers like Ebdane, set to go public with their complaints about Napolcom. Such a move could adversely affect their careers, he said.

But Codilan said the PNP would study the issues raised by the ACPPI.

He said the PNP would abide by the law which placed the police organization under the "administrative supervision" of the Napolcom.

In the interview the other day, Domondon said Napolcom should be abolished by Congress and replaced by an entirely new body attached to the Office of the President.

This setup, he said, would "professionalize" the PNP since it would keep politicians from trooping into the offices of the national police, such as in the promotional officers.

Under the present system, Ebdane noted, Napolcom serves to "censor" the new appointments previously deliberated upon by the PNP Senior Officers Placements and Promotions Board.

Domondon had also described as "anomalous" the fact that a supposedly independent body like Napolcom was headed by a political appointee—the secretary of interior and Local Government.

Golfeo, however, said that he saw no problem with the DILG chief also heading Napolcom. "We're also under the President who is a political leader."

ERICSON

Heart docs to take up RP's top killer

A HOLISTIC approach to control and evaluate mortality in atherosclerosis, hypertension and dyslipidemia will be the major focus of discussion in the 9th joint annual convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and Philippine Lipid Society.

Shaed Feb. 5-7 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, the three-day convention has adopted the theme "Looking up for Holistic Cardiovascular Control."

The convention brings together the country's top medical and health care professionals to tackle the various issues and share the latest advances in the management of atherosclerosis, the country's top killer disease.

Dr. Esperanza I. Cabral, president of the Philippine Society of Hypertension and Dr. Dante B. Morales, president of the Philippine Lipid Society, said in a joint statement that the 9th joint convention of the two organizations "offers the unique opportunity for all specialties, primary care physicians and co-health professionals in the private and government sectors to share, exchange knowledge and ideas and discuss important topics."

Dr. Nelson Alelando is overall chair of the organizing committee.

Cellphone users paying for landlines, says Villar

ABOUT 14 million mobile phone subscribers are being made to subsidize "unprofitable landlines" in the country, Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said yesterday.

Villar, chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and Finance, is pushing to amend Republic Act 7925 which governs the telecommunications industry and provides for a cross-subsidy for land-exchange carriers to carry out landline expansion.

He argued that forcing land telecommunications companies to subsidize the installation and maintenance of landlines across the country are, in effect, forcing those suffering cheaper toll rates to 14 million Filipinos who use mobile phones.

"It is unfair for consumers to shoulder the cost of installing landlines in this country," he said in the explanatory session.

Villar said the original objective of RA 7925, which was formulated in 1995, was to expand the density and reach of landlines across the country is provided for a cross-subsidy for local exchange carriers.

Villar argued, "The law may no longer be relevant because of developments in telecommunications," he said.

With the proliferation of mobile phone technology and to increasing affordability demand for landline subscriptions is at its lowest and is not expected to ever increase.

Since 1995, there have been 13 million subscriptions for landlines, having more than half of the 6.9 million landlines installed underground (mixed) Gilbert Asiedo

Rotary looking for playwrights

THE ROXAS Club of Makati Ilustrado (ROMA) Rotary 3830, is looking for playwrights and would-be playwrights to join its competition on the theme, "The Rotary Way," in observance of the Centennial Year of Rotary International.

The play-writing contest aims to promote public awareness about all through a story line that underscores the club's mission, accomplishments, history and projects all over the world, and how Rotary has contributed to the lives of individuals and beneficiaries. It is open to non-Rotarians.

Reference materials on Rotary may be found at Rotary International's website — www.rotary.org, RC Makati Diamond Inc. Website — www.rcmd3830.org.

Philippine Rotary Magazine — the official regional magazine of Rotary International — www.philrotary.com — 87 Plateros Avenue, BRBA, Quezon City, tel. 926-7451 and 453-2000, or e-mail at office@philrotary.com.

The winning play shall be turned into a musical to be staged in February. The winning entry shall receive a cash prize of P100,000 (Peso of P10,000 each will be awarded to the ten top three finalists.

Vigan youth reunion

THE MEMBERS of the Vigan Youth Center of yesteryears will hold their second grand reunion in Vigan City with a three-day reunion starting today. Coordinators for the reunion, called us all VYC members and their families to join the event, which will be highlighted by a VYC and Balik-Bayan Night at Vigan's Plaza Burgos tomorrow.

The reunion is in conjunction with the week-long Vigan City fiesta celebration that runs. Tomorrow's affair at Plaza Burgos will be a ball dance reminiscent of the dance parties the VYC use Kinetic for in the 1960s. Apply, DJ Jacinto and Ok Rasca will perform.

The reunion kicks off with a welcome breakfast today, courtesy of VYC members Edelio and Ada Montesa at The Bistro of Cordillera.

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Listening
Learning
Leading

Fish catch down, tribe looks up

From page A1

for Indigenous Peoples in Barangay San Lorenzo and, in turn, lay out measures to avoid water contamination.

The Batangas shoreline is the only one pumping.

A water crisis looms in Metro Manila due to the decreasing level in the Angat reservoir, which supplies the capital's most needs. Water elevation at the reservoir Friday last week was 199.82 cubic meters. On Sunday, it was down to 199.04 cubic meters, and yesterday it slipped to 198.34 cubic meters.

Medardo Cuarto, head of the Angat watershed reservation, said the reservoir's average level ranged from 209 cubic meters to its spilling level of 212 cubic meters. Officials are expecting the water level to drop further because of the absence of rain in the watershed and reservoir area.

Tap Wawa Dam

Worried over the dwindling water level in Angat Dam, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) is set to tap the Wawa Dam in Rodriguez, Rizal.

Reva said the Wawa Dam can store 1.6 million cubic meters a day, hence, it was such a waste that the water just flows out into Manila Bay.

Wawa Dam, also known as Montalban Dam, used to supply water to the municipality and Rizal province, but was completely abandoned when Angat Dam was tapped.

"Different sectors clamored to tap the Wawa River as an additional water source 11 years ago during a recent shortage. Perhaps, the government could seriously look into this possibility as even a small drinking water supply," Reva said.

Water allocation

As a result of the dwindling water level, water allocation for the different cities in Metro Manila was reduced from 40.7 cubic feet December to 39.33 cms in March, and 38.6 cms in April.

According to reports, this percentage have already reduced by 6 percent the irrigation supply to farmlands in Bulacan and some parts of Pampanga.

Reva warned that the government's failure to tap the Wawa River or other possible water sources may prove costly to the economy. It could cause a shortfall in food crop production, particularly in Bulacan.

Settlers in watershed

Aside from falling water levels, Cuarto, head of the Angat watershed reservation, is also concerned about settlers occupying the watershed, a protected area. Illegal logging and poaching activities would worsen the effects of the drought, he said.

Cuarto has asked the Bulacan government's help in evicting the villages of San Lorenzo from the watershed to stop its degradation. The presence of at least 500 families within the watershed puts the area at high risk.

"There were periods in the past when [wild boar] were also killed. Locals by birds, [like cockfighting] activities still occupy the whole watershed," he said.

Around 90 percent of the water from Angat supplies the needs of Metro Manila and nearby areas. The remaining 1 percent of the reservoir's water, he said, is diverted to the Bustos dam to supply irrigation needs of farmers in Bulacan.

Fears

Bulacan water dues if water level in the reservoir dropped to 180 cubic meters, dam authorities would be forced to stop supplying Bulacan water to Bulacan and Metro Manila. But if the water level drops to 160 cubic meters, Angat would stop supplying water to Metro Manila.

"The level is lower than the pipelines of Angat Dam, so how can we expect the water to continue flowing down to Bulacan to supply to irrigation?" Bulacan pleaded.

Cuarto has expressed similar fears if rains do not come in March or April.

Reckless probably hit rock

[illegible] police said Wednesday that the MV Reckless probably hit an underwater rock.

"The damage on the hull is obvious that the ship was aground before flipping over," said Supt. Tom Ramos, the head of the police marine team at the scene. "This probably caused a hole in the accident, but it is too early to say if that is the only reason the ship capsized. An inquiry will determine that."

Experts, who spoke more freely, drew conclusions on the possible cause of the disaster. Most ship were convinced that the ship had hit a rocky reef.

"We are positive, [as] we are sure that the ship had a violent impact. Two of the hollow rods were heavily damaged. It took a very due impact [still] [illegible]," said Dave Joachim Eisenberg of the Germanischer Lloyd, subsidiary of the Lloyd's certification group that declared the Reckless seaworthy.

"That's why it capsized," he told the daily Inquirer.

The body of a fourth woman, believed to be that of a Filipina, has been recovered from the ill-fated ship MV Reckless, according to reports circulating the Department of Labor and Employment yesterday.

Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief Angelo Angeles said one of the Filipino fatalities was identified by his wife. He said the wife was also employed aboard a ship as the same.

Angeles said the Owwa fact-finding team hopes that the 33 missing Filipinos in the 90-member Reckless crew had survived. But he conceded that the chances were slim.

Notwithstanding it is urging concerned relatives not to give up hope in the search for survivors.

Panelists Mangahas to [illegible] express [illegible] of the remaining Filipinos in praying for a miracle that "somehow they are still alive." [illegible] spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a statement. Reports from [illegible] and [illegible]

The WORLD

Editor Luwenna B. Gueco

Thailand latest bird flu flashpoint

BANGKOK—After days of denying it had a problem, Thailand became the latest flashpoint in the bird flu crisis with claims Thursday that a village boy is infected, while the World Health Organization warned that the fast-spreading virus could mature into a form deadlier to humans.

Bird flu has killed five people in Vietnam and infected millions of chickens across Asia. Its fast, fowl-to-human transmission...

"The more widespread it becomes, the greater the possibility that the virus could become altered and become more of a threat to the human population," said WHO spokesperson Bob Dietz in Paris.

In Bangkok, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra denied claims that the country's first bird flu case in humans had been confirmed by a laboratory

But a Thai senator, Nitua Pitakkumbora, accused officials of covering up the political and business reasons? Because of a boy in central Suphanburi province, whom he said, tested positive for the disease.

Another senator, Wallop Thangsarasuruk, warned against any cover-up. If Thailand does have bird flu.

Not virginia, the Chinese cited in some up this BIRD and Bird Like you which had consequences and pressure from the world community," he said. "So for Thai government should not do like the Chinese did on SARS. It's the government's job to inform the public without making them panic."

Thailand is among the world's top five poultry exporters and has especially insisted that it has not been hit by bird flu, saying that the six million chickens that have died or been destroyed in central Thailand were infected with bird cholera and other respiratory diseases.

Japan, though, announced a ban on Thai chicken meat imports Thursday in a precaution.

The sick boy is one of three people being tested for bird flu in Thailand.

The WHO has expressed alarm over the spread of the flu that has attacked millions of chickens throughout Vietnam, Japan and South Korea, as many governments in Asia struggled with ways to contain the disease.

"There is growing concern about the situation as we've seen reports of increasing H5N1 infection in poultry," WHO said.

Several countries have banned poultry imports from Vietnam, South Korea and Japan.

Mainland China, which is battling a resurgence of SARS, has been especially vigilant at its southern borders with Vietnam.

Increased scrutiny of border areas and closer inspections of poultry are under way part of an ongoing response to the bird flu that has hit Vietnam, South Korea and China. The country has closed its doors to food from Vietnam, South Korea and China. AP

N. Korea did not prove it had nuke arms, says US expert

WASHINGTON—A US scientist who toured a secretive North Korean nuclear complex said Wednesday the Stalinist state did not prove it had made or could develop a nuclear bomb, but likely had the capacity to make weapons-grade plutonium.

But Dr. Siegfried Hecker suggested that US policymakers would be foolish to assume North Korea could not produce nuclear weapons.

Hecker, senior fellow of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, said during his first public testimony on his trip two weeks ago that North Korea also denied US claims that it confessed to a US claim it had a uranium enrichment program.

The US accusation sparked a nuclear crisis in October 2002 which has defied a drive to find a diplomatic solution.

Since then, North Korea has restarted a long-stagnant nuclear reactor at its notorious Yongbyon complex and is piling up plutonium at the rate of an kilogramme a year, Hecker told the Senate foreign relations committee.

But a larger 50-megawatt reactor at the complex, frozen under a now-ruptured 1994 arms-nuclear deal with the United States, was in a state of disrepair and clearly inoperable, he reported.

Hecker, part of two unofficial government delegations to North Korea, said he was shown what appeared to be a couple of rods—coated plutonium, a key ingredient for nuclear weapons.

North Korean officials described the rebuttals as evidence they had a nuclear "deterrent."

"As Pyongyang they demonstrated they must likely had the capability to make plutonium metal," he said. AFP

Dem hopefuls prepare for New Hampshire debate

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire—Democratic contenders on Thursday were to have their first debate since the Iowa caucuses result-lished a new pecking order, spending former front-runner Howard Dean and unsettling surprise struggler John Kerry as the men to beat.

Five days before the New Hampshire primary, the deck was completely reshuffled and the frontrunner status was up for grabs, with long-time favorite Dean now wounded by a backlash following his Iowa caucuses Monday.

Most polls showed the former Vermont governor dropping in the direction of heads, although at least one survey, by a local television station, showed Massachusetts Senator Kerry edging ahead.

Meanwhile, the five remaining contenders for Democratic presidential nomination planned to fan out across New Hampshire again Thursday, seeking votes in a tightening battle between Dean, Kerry and retired army general Wesley Clark.

For the most part, Democrats on Wednesday aimed their barbs at the campaign trail heir of Republican President George W. Bush, hammering his record on everything from the ballooning deficit, to the high cost of health care, to economic inequalities between rich and poor, which have deepened during his tenure.

"The problem is that the president says that the state of the union is strong, but the question is, which union?" said North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, who was second place to Iowa—Bush on Tuesday gave his annual State of the Union speech to Congress.

"The president is not talking about the two Americas we have. He has public school systems, the two health care systems, two different governments, and how we're going to build one America that works for everybody," Edwards said.

Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman, along with Clark had stayed out of the Iowa caucuses, opting instead to concentrate on New Hampshire, where he hoped an eventual victory would catapult his campaign to greater success in upcoming primary and caucus votes. AFP

Israel prosecutors eye charges against Sharon

JERUSALEM—Israeli prosecutors are considering whether to indict Prime Minister Ariel Sharon after a court charged a businessman on Wednesday with trying to bribe him in the 1990s, a justice ministry source said.

The source said prosecutors would decide within two months whether to charge Sharon—a move that would almost certainly force from office the right-wing former general who has won popularity for tough measures against a Palestinian uprising.

Sharon's spokesperson had no immediate comment.

An Israeli court indicted property developer David Appel earlier on Wednesday on charges of trying to bribe Sharon when he was foreign minister in the late 1990s, sparking opposition calls for his resignation.

Sharon, 75, has denied any wrongdoing in a string of corruption scandals that have dashed his eminently clear his popularity.

But mounting legal troubles could threaten his support in Israel and weaken his hand in seeking a peace arrangement with Palestinians. Sharon, if indicted, would likely be charged along with his son, Gilad, and Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, a close ally in the ruling Likud party.

"The state attorney's office will take from a few weeks to a few months to decide whether or not charges will be brought against Sharon, Olmert and Gilad on the Greek island affair," the justice ministry source said, referring to a real-estate deal.

A Channel 2 television report said Israel's state attorney Edna Arbel believed Sharon should be indicted within two weeks, but that other attorneys in the prosecutor's office, who also have a say in the final decision, disagreed.

Analysts said that while the indictment against Appel would disturb Sharon's image, it posed no direct threat to his power because prosecutors had not presented any evidence showing he knowingly accepted money for political favors.

A senior political source close to Sharon said: "He's not going to resign. There is no change against him."

Sharon's legal analyst is Israel Maida, Moshe Negbi, said the chances of an indictment against Sharon were 50-50.

Although an indictment in itself would not force Sharon to quit, Junior Minister Yosef Lapid suggested otherwise when he said the prime minister would have to "draw conclusions" if charged. Most analysts think Sharon would have to resign.

If Sharon and Olmert were both removed from the picture then likely contenders would be Israel premier and Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz and Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom.

The charge dated against Appel said he had paid over $150 million in an attempt to bribe Sharon and Olmert. Ben Jerusalem news to help him push the cupboard into the deals. *Reuters*

MONKEY BUSINESS

Children dressed as monkeys pose for photos at a temple fair celebrating the Chinese New Year's Day, Jan. 22. Thousands flocked to temple fairs across the city to mark the beginning of the Year of the Monkey. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

4 Iraqi laundresses killed

AMMAN, Iraq—Four Iraqi laundresses working at a US military base south of Baghdad were killed and five others wounded when gunmen ordered a minibus they were traveling in, a survivor said Thursday. The attack occurred on Wednesday on the road linking the Baghdad town of Iskandar, 50 kilometers (miles) to the US base of Babylon, survivor said. "We were nine women and the driver. It was 6:30 p.m. and we were going, as every day, to the laundry at a base where we work in the laundry," said Maggie Kiri, 40, wounded in the leg, shoulder and hand. "It is a job that the attackers want because it is said that the drivers will become rich from the contracts with the Americans." *AFP*

Pakistan nuke scientists

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan nuke scientists known to have met Libya in recent months before the alleged clandestine overflow of its top nuclear scientists on allegations of leaking sensitive technology, a senior Pakistani official said. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, wouldn't provide the exact timing of the trips or say what was discussed. But the disclosure indicated the government's efforts to the point to reports linking allegations of nuclear proliferation. "Yes, we can't see your hands in two and Libya earlier yesterday began after the official said Wednesday. "The other organizations assisted from information learned in the trips, as well as evidence handed to Pakistan by the International Atomic Energy Agency," the official said. The remarks lifted some of the mystery surrounding the detained scientists, whose families are defying orders to stay quiet and have appealed for their release. Their plight has wounded in a country where nuclear tests overcame for giving Pakistan the first "Islamic bomb" as a defense against archenemy India. *AP*

81,000 Yakuza in Japan

TOKYO—The number of Japanese Yakuza gang members soared to 81,000 in 2003, as criminal organizations expanded their activities, police said today, reports said Thursday. The number rose 800 from a year ago, the National Police Agency said in its latest annual survey, without explaining the reason for the increase. Of the total, 41,400 of the gangsters are not affiliated with specific criminal organizations, the agency said. Agency spokesperson declined to comment on the statistics, which seemingly based on the membership of Yakuza syndicates by police and local public safety commissioners. *AFP*

Ex-CIAs rally round spy

WASHINGTON—A group of former CIA officials is pushing for a congressional investigation into the "shameful" leaking of the name of undercover officer Valerie Plame, whose husband cast doubt on the Bush administration's claims about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. In a letter to Bill Frist, Republican Senate Majority leader, 20 CIA veterans said the disclosure of Plame's identity is "shameful event in American history." Bush had managed national security. Congress must send an unambiguous message that the intelligence officers tasked with collecting or analyzing intelligence must never be turned into political pawns, they said. "Secrets said, relying could hinder frequently and the work and safety of intelligence professionals and their sources. The justice department is conducting an investigation into who leaked Plame's name to newspaper columnist Robert Novak last year. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Edsa II as millstone

ANOTHER year, another Edsa II celebration, another occasion for barbecue and regret. On the third anniversary of the revolution, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, who got the ball rolling for the 2001 revolution when he called on President Joseph Estrada to resign for pocketing tobacco taxes and illegal gambling payoffs.

We can only wonder if the words would have been just as resolute had Sin's replacement, Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, been there to deliver the homily himself (he did not make it because he had to come from Rigan where he toasted Archbishop Edmundo Abaya on the latter's 75th birthday). Our guess is that Rosales would not have pulled his punches. After all, he also supported the 2001 revolution.

The strong words reflect the distaste and frustration of many who find though Edsa II would somehow pull the people together again, much as the first Edsa did, only for the hopes to be dashed as the opportunities for arbitrary and conversion were squandered one by one, again much as what happened after the first Edsa. Edsa II has simply gone the way of Edsa I.

But there's a difference. Edsa I retains a certain magic because it signaled, after all, a democratic transition not only to the nation, but also to other nations as well with repressive regimes (remember that Edsa unleashed the pro-democracy tide that swept South Korea, Poland, Pakistan and the rest of the world). Edsa I remains a valid revolution. If one is to, there would have been no Edsa II. But Edsa II is problematic because its impact is ambiguous at best. Edsa I toppled a dictatorship and replaced it with a democracy, for better or for worse. Edsa II toppled a corrupt president who, however, was a duckling of the dictator masters. It didn't exactly unify the people; it drove a wedge between them. True enough, it prefigured and resulted in "Edsa III," the counter-revolution of the Lacson proletariat.

Moreover, Edsa II was not a clean break with the past. It was not a revolution in the strictest sense because it was an uprising that sought constitutional basis for kicking out Estrada and replacing him with then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Mr Macapagal herself knows she's laboring under the oppressive burden of the past, particularly the question of her legitimacy. Thus, she has broken her promise not to run in order to seek a presidential mandate of her own.

If Edsa II is lost to the legacy of Edsa I, if it is lost to the disappointment and the frustrations of the aftermath of 1986. Although Edsa I was a high point in Philippine history, and its immediate impact was instantaneous—the toppling of a dictatorship—and the birth of the pro-democracy movement worldwide—it cannot also be guaranteed that since then, Philippine politics has been one long downslide. Political discourse in this country remains protracted between the bankrupt liberal democracy and the bankrupt Left. The Left does not offer any alternative. In the meantime, traditional politicians have continued to thrive and debased its legacy.

The debasement is evident in the aftermath of Edsa II. Seeking to shore up her position and strengthen her bid for legitimacy, the President has compromised the principles of the revolution, formed partnerships with the Old Guard, and practically struck a bargain with the devil himself. The opposition has done likewise, compelling a popular actor with zero credentials to challenge Mr Macapagal, in effect compromising principle and substance to a bid to win the presidency at any cost, come what may.

And so the historic weight of Edsa II, its legacy of spectacular aspirations and spectacular disappointments, has become more oppressive in the run-up to the election as politicians jettison principle for compromise after compromise in their eagerness to anoint their prospects in May. Edsa II has become a nightmare. It has become a millstone around the neck of its children.

SC didn't say graft attended Comelec bidding

THE GMA graft charges filed against Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and the other commissioners may be a big problem. I read the majority decision of the Supreme Court voiding the P1.3 billion automation contract of the Comelec with Mega Pacific (as well as the dissenting opinions) and there is no suggestion that "graft and corruption attended the bidding process" in the entire 100-page. In fact, there were the exact words of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr in his dissenting opinion: "there was no graft and corruption." The concern was to "uphold only such contracts" that are "clearly and unmistakably not fatally flawed."

Associate Justice Dante Tinga said in another dissenting opinion that procedure is the long suit of the defunct Commission, any lapses in jurisprudence. He said, "Due regard to the independence (not to say constitutional) character of the Commission requires that the power of this court to review the acts of that body should be used sparingly" lest it "usurp the prerogatives of the Comelec to declare void the contracts it executes."

Because of the peculiar circumstances of the situation, I think the Comelec was in a no-win situation. Whatever it did, it would leave some critics red-eyed and mad. In the end, the Comelec had rescinded the contract to the lowest bidder. Where is the gain there? Had the Comelec awarded it to the second lowest bidder, it would certainly have been sued, too. The second lowest bid was almost P90 million higher than Mega Pacific's and it was only after a limited number of phase-in against Mega Pacific's offer by the whole country. There were 36 bidders. None of them protested the award. All the losing bidders accepted that Mega Pacific deserved the award in the end.

So why did the majority void the contract? Because the bidding and award process was not perfectly transparent. It created an air of uncertainty and fear that an executive may

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

run this would decide the election of the entire government may not be squeaky clean. The decision could many shortcomings and "technicalities" of the Comelec's own bidding rules. But they should have been viewed in the light of the "peculiar circumstances" and the lack of time.

It was supposed that the Comelec should have conducted another bidding. But there is no more time to do that. And since bid irregularities participated in the first bidding, none of whom protested the results, what good would a new bidding do?

And an editorial of a newspaper: "That aside rebidding engenders another costly more expensive exercise, considering the enormous savings in the government from the winning bid. The main contention of the protesters, that the winner was disqualified by a failure to file concurrences, was fully answered by the submission of the missing documents and the affirmation of necessary presentations, as Tinga so brilliantly demonstrates."

In the final analysis, what the decision amounted to voiding the contract for the automated counting machines is that because the bidding process was flawed, the machines won't count the votes correctly. For its part, the petition concludes that because the Comelec was "dishonest" to the bidding process, it will certainly bring in the cheating of votes, plus the evils of dishonesty, bidding to deliver elections.

But the petitioners did not say for whom and against whom will the Comelec be dishonest. And so the cause of the dishonesty could be any political party or any candidate.

The Supreme Court decision rather leans the same dropped conclusion, which runs something like this: Because the bidding was discredited and dishonest, the counting machines should not work.

But isn't it obvious that any dishonesty in the bidding has nothing to do with the performance of the machines? Conversely, even if the bidding is pure and clean, it does not mean that the machines should work perfectly.

Back to this petition: Nothing is mentioned in our thing but criminal liability is involved. The court decision should be used carefully because it appears that of the nine justices who voted to void the contract, only five voted for investigation of the signing of the bidders. The other four did not vote for such investigation. On the other side are the dissenters: Tinga, joined by Justices Adolf Azcuna and Romeo Ceniza, plus the Chief Justice who voted that "the case be dismissed," stating further that there was no suggestion of graft and corruption or that the contract price was excessive or unreasonable, and Justice Jose Vitug who said "I am accustomed to vote against the Comelec's taking cognizance of the case." That makes five. Thus, the voting is 5-5. A majority does not result in criminal investigations.

Further, the Comelec chair said the contract can be processed while in effect only after congressional proceedings are completed. Congress has not yet completely surrendered and processed and relate in effect.

TODAY'S POLL:
Raul Roco: "Hero ang Inarol"
Ping Lacson: "Bida ang Tinapay"
FPJ: "Alive ang Mindanao"
GMA: "Ulan sa Aking Comelec"

Valley of death

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ALBERT Blackburn says the anti-death penalty polemicist and the Church are bound to prevail against any to repeal the death penalty at the end of the day because it is on the side of life. Rubbish, it is not. "Think politicians the law a means to explicitly punish the guilty and give justice to the victim, not deterrence. Those politicians want to save the heinous criminal, even mind the victim, his any issues, a and the victim's family, are a distant second."

It's not true, he says, that the bible does not sanction the execution of criminals. Exodus and Deuteronomy show clearly the Bible does not sanction the taking of human life, but not equally true.

Well, I am not a theologian, but I think I know enough about the Bible to say that New Testament is believed superior to the Old in its teachings. Mostly, the concept of turning the other cheek, which Jesus Christ taught, over the wrong eye of an eye for an eye, which God himself laid the other put to be propagated. This was what the reading of the riot applied. Besides, the old says, which were the spiritual province of the Pharisees, were no longer binding. The first of Civil Himself had come to preach a newer and kinder message based on love rather than retribution. For twelve Christian doctrine, you have to go to Christian doctrine.

On more secular ground, however, I don't see why it's the anti-death penalty politicians and the Church that stand in possession on this issue. The anti-death penalty position is not the popular or popular one. I should think, based on readers' reactions to my columns on the issue, that the majority of Filipinos favor the death penalty position. Politicians who oppose the death penalty may not expect more votes, they may expect less.

The one who is clearly pursuing on this issue is the President, who has never taken an unequivocal stand on it. I think from this that she is eager to move one bailed protest to the one class of criminals that is giving her no end of grief: the kidnappers. The more kidnappings there are, the more trying it is for the President to keep her promise not to run in order to seek a presidential mandate of her own. The more kidnappings there are, the more she is tempted to declare martial law in order to stop them. The more kidnappings there are, the more she is tempted to declare martial law in order to stop them. The more kidnappings there are, the more she is tempted to declare martial law in order to stop them.

Christian, and particularly the New Testament, of humanism against it, but what hasn't felt the rush of humanist anger particularly against those who take hope, or kidnap and murder children? Isn't the easiest thing in the world to say society does not profit from compounding a wrong, says another wrong, by taking a murder to another murder. It is the easiest thing in the world to say the law of the eye-for-an-eye-for-a-tooth is barbaric, that it is the law of the jungle, that it is the law of the savage, that those who did them wrong. But are we sure when you face the victims themselves and feel the depth of their grief.

My only answer to this is the message the Carmelite of Hope has been spreading. The Carmelite of Hope is the message of the victims of heinous crimes, which gives them the moral authority to say what they do. They are not talking from the valley of death; they are talking from the point of experience. Not all of them are Christians. But all of them have had to grapple with the death penalty on the grounds that not only does it not benefit society, it does not benefit the kin of the victims themselves. It is true, as Blackburn says, a million deaths by the murderers will never console. But that is the very point: the kin of the victims who have turned the Carmelite of Hope are opposing the death penalty. It does not heal, they say. It leaves only a hole in the heart, which remains there forever.

The only thing that can fill that can heal the spirit, or make the heart whole again, is to see above the killer. That is by refusing to do what he did, which was to kill. That is by valuing human life, even the killer's own. None of this is to suggest forgiving or for pardoning, there may not be repentance or remorse. All this is to suggest responding and responding. All this would not be words, except for one thing: that I have whatever they speak. They have the blood of their loved ones on their consciences to argue for it.

I have also, who has been pleading with the government to not, the kind of death, and listen a thing or two about what God wants. Notwithstanding that, it is GMA who likes to support the dove.

Teaching street children to love

Sr. Mary Asunpta Lim of the Religious of the Good Shepherd (RGS) cordially encouraged through her 161 thought-provoking letters a few months, she brought out a perceptible and visible brave-out inside.

"Ah! Here it is!" she exclaimed. "Hun. I have another one," she quickly added as she fished out another colorful card, inside the bag again. With a big grin on her face, she showed the small-size handwritten note and me and exclaimed, "Ay ang sarap sabihin!" (It's so delightful to say this!)

When I looked at the note, Sister's office, you would see that it is the work of a man who is almost 70 years old. There are men everywhere! There are small-time men on her desk, on the living cabinet and on the shelves. There are even as many kinds of men as there are kinds. Some almost all come and she brought the others, using a Filipino dimension to her small children's program.

Rosy Amanda's morning, a bunch of 10- to 12-year-old current children from under the C-5 bridge had a sojourney in Barangka, Marikina, would go to the RGS convent to study. Sister Lim Mary and some volunteers. They play games such as throwing balls into laundry baskets, badminton and hooking.

Sometimes, too, they help out in the convent's garden. Most of the time, however, Sister Lim Mary gives them the basic rudiments of child labor.

The nuns has become the children's home, where they live on their own without the guidance of a family. Couldn't mixed up their ideas of work, punishment and love. The only way we would like is by teaching them what to love and how to love by loving them.

At times Mary took them in. She spends time planning games for them, feeding them, playing and praying with them, too. Using some clothes, she also makes fabric them shopping once in a while. She eventually brought new pairs of sandals for new boys. Last Thursday she shopped for the green coat finally, a bowling set and badminton rackets for the nuns' quarters (we had four frames). One male boy was so renewed for a little girl who seemed to new mother and asked for a coin hoard she would not be able to open it into grass compartments for her to do so.

Sister Mary also teaches them proper conduct through making their Catholic values. "It takes a lot of patience and kindness to discipline them," she said. She narrated that a boy once took a bus, grabbed the last bought for P150 and sold it for P10. In such cases, she tells the children they would no longer be welcomed to the group if they continue with their misbehavior.

The is the last thing the children want. They do not want to lose these Saturdays of making wonderful childhood memories they would not have in the dark alleys of the city. They treasure these days with Sister Mary when they are at their best behavior, helping her in the garden of the convent. Regarding all their mistakes, the times of mischief they took nuns and women their and not their mistakes back lives and pals.

Sister Mary loves them all despite their sick, mischievousness and tendency to pilfer a few small things.

And the children return also to love and how to love by loving her in return.

COMMENTARY

Nice Concepcion A. Antonio
Institute on Church and Social Issues

The children do not want to lose these Saturdays of making wonderful childhood memories

Debate on death penalty heats up

THE RESUMING of the case against Roberto Lara and Jorge Lascuña, whose murders by lethal injection is scheduled for Jan. 30, has rekindled the debate on the death penalty. The accused is expected to have up even more with the diplomatic intervention of the European Union, which is actively widening its campaign against capital punishment on a global scale. In fact, the controversy surrounding the death penalty has

COMMENTARY

Leonard G. Rhoda Jr.

No charmer, but...

I ENJOY the first time Secretary Salvador Enrile Mangala appeared in public—speaking at the Columbo hearing on the poisoning mail by Fernando Poe Jr.'s candidacy—that he would get himself into heaps of trouble.

For barren like since we were kids in high school, and now for occasional meetings, last week in the intervening years, but I could clearly see something in the fashion changed, and that was his personality. I was not a typical Enrile—he was very quiet and timid. Though he could claim what he wanted, he wasn't one to force his temper or his choices just to please others or quiet down himself. But he has changed, and the man I thought quite unlikely among his staff is the Architect. I would not find his acquired. He wouldn't have been an easy boss to work for. Though I have no doubts about the story that he would plant dead fish on the desk of anyone who failed to measure up to his pick. He may be short-tempered, but not crazy.

I know he would have difficulties dealing with the secretary and the media. He wants to have been very selective. He "volunteered" once, and that would show him to choose his opponents or issue quick, there would have, admittedly, he didn't look off very well during the Senate committee hearing. When pulled by Sen. Tito Sotto on whether he did not have enough time to study the bill before he signed the order drawn into the steps they wanted to study the documents, he simply denied the charges outright, refusing to the senator's suspension, to which Sotto replied that those who count heads prefer to the public to save by life.

* * *

AT A PRESS conference, Manapat maintained that he was going on leave, presumably to restore his self-confidence that he would be getting the position, particularly over his subordinates, to block a free and impartial investigation.

The sum this will be taken against him. Precisely, particularly the media, are quite capable of pressure that when an official goes on leave in the course of a probe, he or she is practically admitting guilt. He will try out for deliberation in public service, but again unwilling to recognize. It even when it's right before our eyes.

AT LARGE

Nina Jimenez-David

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, interviewed over ANC, said he was inclined to believe the three Ambers employees on the grounds that "the subaltern seems to bear by-the-law character to the more believable." Manapat, the senator said, had everything to gain by standing by the authenticity of the questioned documents. "He would be unrecognizing his in standing to the administration and government if he be positive," said Pimentel. The employees, on the other hand, had planted their jobs at risk.

But who's being more sincere? As it is, Manapat seems to me to be hard-headed but not sure. He felt free to offer more of his time in his defense instead of Philippine history. If he leaves the Architecture, does a cloud of doubt, his name and reputation suffered by suspicions of forgery, shoddiness and intrigue, I doubt anyone will want to hire him, not even as a high-school history teacher.

And if he says indeed colluding with the invalid brochure to oust more prominent personalities in the Ramos Cabinet, it's ridiculous. Any scientific would be silly as the statement of unemployed "fill-in-the-blank" of talents, he's admitted, can't sound his guns? He may some access as everyone at times, but certainly Manapat hasn't earned stupid.

* * *

THE DISQUIETUDE, on the other hand, seems to be prevalent for now. If any of them is dismissed or left off, even by his own choice, he will be faced with their acrimony. Even if Manapat remains as head of the Architect, he hands are effectively tied as far as working cooperate on the three is concerned. He can throw in a whole cage full of people—their desks has down to nothing for one decision

LOOKING BACK

Andrew D. E. Ocampo

Manansala's early life

VICENTE Manansala's autobiography will cover two more volumes, and this is the last I will discuss on it. It covers his early life, his main mentor who safeguard him and the his fights he engaged in and was against bullies. For our purposes, I have excerpted material that focus on his artistic training as follows:

"When I go to school in the primary grade, my mother gave me three cuaderno's (one from Monday to Friday; Every day I spread one cuaderno for paper, a kind of paper just like this paper I am writing on, only that pinamalat paper) but would not let me spend my baon. Instead, she bought me pad paper, drawing pencils, Faber-Castell erasers, Bazooka Bubble Gum and bottles. I do this every morning as follows:

"When I was in the fourth grade I went to Bellas Artes. The Escuela de Bellas Artes was located on M. Hidalgo, Quiapo. After school in the afternoon at around 3:00, I walked from Intramuros to the Art School. I did not pay any tuition whatsoever. That is, I guess, from 1933 to 1934 or 1935.

"The teaching is different at that time. We are not just given this to trace or to copy and then you get a passing grade. It is the freedom of choosing by themselves, the artist, the involvement of the choice how he does and need a free to paint bright or he was too small. In preparatory the approach in teaching is scientific. From the eye to the whole body left to by light.

"I moved from place almost every day. On the rainy days, I brought our big umbrella. Big Ilocano umbrella, the handle was made of bamboo, the color of the cloth was medium bright blue (when it is new, I enjoyed it very much. I never got cured from the habit of moving from place to place. Quiapo, I remember when I was in sixth grade (or seven, I think, I already joined UA) my mom's address was This time Tony Duyungo moved left Bellas Artes. I think after two or three months he did not pay tuition. I moved [illegible] from place to place.

"The view of Manansala's diary concerns the happy moments he had when he spent his summer vacation in Dumaguete, which was so different from life in Intramuros. He intimate how he learned to swim and even delivers raw pages on eating the Dumaguete delicacy known as mole chicken. Eating that is really an acquired taste as the sight of the sweet is not thing. And wrong as to another. The best way to describe it is that it cooked human is yummy on the outside, creamy on the inside.

Manansala's comment on his art education is:

"I entered School of Fine Arts in 1936 formally, meaning I took all subjects I needed. First year: anatomy, History of Arts, Perspective, Life drawing, Decorative C. he antique. Mr. Buenaventura, Jr. Perspective and Anatomy Dr. Herrera. In Sculpture, Mr. Pablo Antonio. In drawing black and white and Mr. Buenaventura. There I saw Victorio Edades, Carlos Francisco painting under Mr. Buenaventura. As who are classmate, he was quiet and stole [illegible]. He was still including, always in white. Anyone every time or most of the time, we were in white. Only in the sense of the kind of white we wear. Not white in color. I did not. I was a bit special if you are wearing colored suit. Mostly darker all the way. If need it is pressed.

"Most of the time I was alone. I was serious with my studies. I like to paint. I concentrated my studies on painting rather than drawing. I never know that drawing is important.

"In my first year I was awarded a medal on anatomy passing under Dr. Herrera [who] was not happy about me winning the medal. He was our professor but he wasn't the judge.

"Later he called me [illegible] but later I was always fighting with him. As I said I don't want to say bullied, but, he called me bampiro. Well, I didn't care."

How someone's study years affect the man is always interesting. It can be seen in the manner he used it to hone his artistic instincts or retain for all his artistic talents.

* * *

Comments are welcome at our correspondence, addressed to Manansala's early life, c/o Opinion Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 24 Sgt. Esguerra Ave., Quezon City, or e-mail to opinion@inq.net.ph.

Debate on death penalty heats up

THE RESUMING of the case against Roberto Lara and Jorge Lascuña, whose murders by lethal injection is scheduled for Jan. 30, has rekindled the debate on the death penalty. The accused is expected to have up even more with the diplomatic intervention of the European Union, which is actively widening its campaign against capital punishment on a global scale. In fact, the controversy surrounding the death penalty has

COMMENTARY

Leonard G. Rhoda Jr.

THEY SAID

Deserved

"He has long deserved one, probably because I was no longer in power."
—Former Commander-in-Chief Ferdinand E. Marcos to Rep. Salvador H. Laurel on the latter's withdrawal of presidential backing for Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos' presidential bid

Worse than a purge

"The Ilocanos called it Oplan. But the party is in apology, called it even worse. It was a crime. There was no respect for human rights."
—delegate to the Ilaga Board, on the reconstruction drive of the Philippine Democratic Party-Laban (PDP-Laban) which once a Ilocano-considered bailiwick of traditional politicians and turned sour

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Presidency has complex demands

LETTERS

THIS is in response to Roberto M. Tiamzon's letter on the editor last Jan. 16, 2004 titled, "Arroyo's just an ambitious mood."

In his letter, Tiam- defended Fernando Poe Jr.'s lack of governance/executive credentials in running for the presidency. He adds, "[...] the office of the president really is that complicated/overseen that it can easily overwhelm anyone who is not a college graduate or especially one who is a dropout." He argued that it is even more difficult to run a corporation than a country because a manager of a corporation must only be organized to "coerce" competence while a president of a country does not have to endow with any competence.

If Filipinos think the way Tiamzon does, we're doomed.

Since the most well meaning person, a person who has a big heart but also hopelessly unsophisticated to run the country's cabinet level is no exception. Why? Because if Susie has not mastered, we are comparing against the rest of the world. Investors pick the areas to base economy to invest in, hence, a president must be able to discern the complex economic dynamics/relationships in an interwoven global market. If he does not have the capacity to do this, then we will lose a/opportunity/investments to other countries.

By investments means no jobs means poverty.

We can have the best and most able consultants, policy advisors and Cabinet officials. But he must be able to analyze the divergent recommendations/advice/people.

For instance, how will PFI, a person who does not have economic background/economic management, reconcile the recommendations of the heads of the Department of State and Industry who would advise soon to give out tax concessions to businesses with the recommendation of the Department of Finance and Bureau of Internal Revenue who are always looking for ways to increase revenue collection?

It is someone who has the key say in the economic and implementation of public policies, a president must be able to discern the most effective policy that will result in successful patient alleviation. He must be able to comprehend who else to engage to/on another country's practice/s have. Since must realize that the basis for choosing someone for an job should not be just skin-deep.

—LLETO MAVIS,
member, GRADES,
744 Ilang-Ilang St., Project 2,
Quezon City, Quezon City

Why HB 5095 should not be passed

THIS is to clarify the concerns raised by Fernando M. Lerona in his letter which appeared in the Inquirer's Jan. 15 issue. Contrary to Lerona's claim that "since 1989, the Filipino workers and family workers have been engaged in a protesting struggle against despotic characters of the Bush administration," we wish to state that the International Rice Research Institute has always upheld the rights of its workers by closely adhering to the labor laws of the Philippines. As an international organization, IRRI adopts universally accepted standards and mechanisms on employee counseling and internal organizations to increase the protection of labor rights.

We wish to underscore that less than IRRI's very progressive/successful the rights and dignity of Filipino workers. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) itself declared April 2003, stated that it was not included to support House Bill 5095 because the existing mechanisms as the international organizations for dispute resolution are adequate and afforded due process to employees. Furthermore, Neda stated that the benefits package offered by IRRI to its employees were deemed better than most in the local labor market.

We love than the Supreme Court, in the case of International Catholic Migrants Commission vs. Pura Calleja, GR No. 80290, which was promulgated on Sept. 28, 1990, categorically enumerated characteristic of the international organizations, the grant of immunity. The decision stated that the purpose of immunities is to facilitate the efficient functioning of international organizations, in accordance with international practices free from political pressure or control by the host country.

In addition to possess the interests of the majority?

On top of this, he must be able to represent our country in diplomatic meetings and international gatherings. He cannot always have an advisor with him to assist his unwillingness in international summits and conferences.

I hope this we all can look beyond a person's popularity and search our need for good leadership which solid credentials. We are calling that our country's presidency have. Since must realize that the basis for choosing someone for an job should not be just skin-deep.

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Lousy housing deal for Smokey's people

SMOKEY Mountain is supposed to be "home sweet."

Nothing could be further from the truth. The report on Smokey Mountain's suffering and neglected communities was very poor.

The trials of the unseen a slum Smokey Mountain communities are the source of ghetto of victim including four infrastructures that is found the cancer of the "power of the powers" living amid the squalor and filth of the coming municipal garbage dump then can crunch them.

The scam is simple. Foreigners and local officials take pictures of the scavengers on the dump and poor children's faces and use them for their "land-saving" campaign to "help the poor." Naturally there are still many charitable people and monument that wouldn't donate by faith "a noble cause." Once the funding is raised, they return to Smokey Mountain, spend a "little of the stuff" on food and more and build nice cluster ward. The rest of the land finds comfort in their personal pockets. Talk to the people of Smokey Mountain and you will unseen all this and lots of "dirty" that continues to have been whatever they see, "poor is a church person."

As reported, "the first batch of residents... started moving to somewhat to the low-cost resettlement complex promised them by the government eight years ago." This statement alone is enough for a reporter to dig into how "low-cost" is low and why it took the government "eight years" to provide.

Furthermore, the report says that the National Housing Authority was spending to "54 families out of 2,510 and awarded "new homes" and allocated them to move into them by Dec. 9 to Dec. 31, 2003. The NHA should apologize to the people who were moving and why the homes were "not new" and of "poor construction." The residents complained about shoddy workmanship and "anomalies in construction" when they were asked to occupy the buildings.

Proper contractors in these buildings will be on the commission of the NHA and the previous administration.

—SERGIO O. MONTEMAYOR,
4 Sinsuat St., Bel Air 2, Makati City

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Court orders transfer of $684-M Marcos loot to gov't

From page A1

—supposedly amounting to $356 million when discovered in 1998 in secret Swiss bank accounts—during his 20-plus rule. The amount grew with interest.

The high court also threw out the reconciliation he reconsidered in favor of the Marcoses.

In its original decision in July, the Supreme Court ordered Marcos heirs, its "failed to justify the lawful source" of the money not received.

and awarded it to the government. It ruled Marcos and his wife, Imelda, legally owned only $304,372 during his two decade reign.

Rights victims

A few inquiries allowed until May on all grants available to be spent on legal matters, but President Macapagal-Arroyo said she wanted 39.56 for net ready to compensate 9,539 Filipinos, who won a class action lawsuit against the former dictator for human rights violations.

Human rights groups want a government trust fund set up to hold the money while Congress debates how much will be given to victims of rights abuses. They also want a group of members to ensure the funds are not misused during the campaign for the May 10 presidential election.

Earlier, PCGG officials said the funds would go to two "special accounts" as the treasury case for the compensation and the other for agrarian reform. But a source in the PCGG said yesterday that the entire forfeited Marcos assets might all go to agrarian reform.

All for land reform

Congress failed to pass a law setting aside about $200 million for the human rights victims. "They promised treasury cannot set aside money for the victims' trailblaze a law from Congress. So the funds will all go to agrarian reform," the source said.

Go after PNB if...

In an earlier interview, Usero said the sheriffs could go after the land assets of the PNB if it failed to come up with the amount.

Section 9, Rule 39 of the Rules of Civil Procedure covering the execution of "money judgment" provides that the holder of decree can go after "all properties belonging to the JMB" should it fail to produce the funds in cash.

But we are going to give the PNB 15 days to comply with the order," he said. And if the PNB failure to comply with the order, the sheriff will bring the matter back to the Sandiganbayan for that decision.

The first division is headed by Associate Justice Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, with Associate Justices Ponce Peñaranda Jr. and Roland Jurado as members.

Sulu-Sulawesi fate tied ...

From page A1

enforcement police," says Don Baker, associate professor of management at the Ateneo.

"We don't want to get hurt and we don't want to cause any loss of life," Baker adds.

Bank statistical orders have caught the eye of the Indonesian, Malaysian and Philippine governments, making close the cost of neglecting an area plagued by sovereignty struggles.

Heart of rich marine life

Seventy percent of the Sulu-Sulawesi region, heart of the world's richest area for marine life, lies in the Philippines, 20 percent in Indonesia and 10 percent in Malaysia.

Next month, the three governments are expected to announce plans for a Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion, tying developments by the area's 46 million inhabitants to the fate of its corals, whales and turtles.

The proposal will be one of the highlights of a meeting from Feb. 9 to 20 in Kuala Lumpur on Biodiversity Conservation, delegates from around the world will seek ways to slow the rate of global species loss.

Protection

But of these work will be to examine how best to plan, establish and manage protected areas on land and sea.

Overfishing and damage to marine habitats has wrought havoc on world fish stocks, with spillover effects on land and mounted populations, and crippling impact on poor coastal communities.

Projected temperature hikes due to climate change could make the problem worse in coming decades as species struggle to adapt.

Share of damage

The Sulu-Sulawesi region has suffered its share of the damage.

Two more workers, coupled with destructive fishing techniques for food and the aquarium trade, have led some to marine stocks and their habitats. Islands' valuable prawn harvest has slipped in recent years despite fishermen spending more days at sea.

The proposed Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion seeks to unload an existing network of protected areas, beef up vastly conservation efforts and create a sustainable fisheries plan that will cover marine borders that straddle the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia.

At first, 10-year phase will target 38 high priority sites for projects requiring $40 million in global funding.

Geoffrey Davison, director of the Worldwide Fund for Nature program in Malaysia's Borneo, says the basics existing protected

Issues on a whole from how which to start.

Crucial thing

"There are some areas also which deserve further protection and a much larger area which demands management rather than protection," Davison says.

"That could be a combination of management and protection at the coastal thing. It's not just protection."

Five former Lankayan Island, which was recently designated part of a 50,000-hectare marine conservation area with two other islands, could offer a useful management model.

Lankayan's reefs are already on the mend after a few years of surveillance led by its owners and dive resort operators.

Increased Malaysian security which has been tightened after the Sipadan bandits kidnapped foreign tourists during raids on two islands resorts in 2000, has helped the region's seals resort to illegal fishing activities declined.

For Lankayan, that means regular patrols on reefs and water that were shown soldiers hung H. to offer deployed at night on its beaches.

Clear, blue water

The efforts are evident in the clear blue water around the area, where schools of jack, batfish, bonjean and occasional lone fish cruise between the shelves.

Shallow reefs close by are greener and black-tipped reef sharks, barrier sharks and by white giant cuttlefish, oblivious to snorkelers, lay eggs in the sand.

Karl Gaerlan, resident and established the conservation zone encompassing Lankayan, persuading various Jakuls resorts to give up their operational control subject to their oversight.

It charges a management fee of 20 usage (RM6,316 per night) to cover the expenses, which Baker says is key.

Funding

"It's got to make a buck and it's got to provide the funding to maintain the conservation area," he says, adding that private sector players can play a big part in conservation worldwide.

Although all three countries are forming the Sulu-Sulawesi zone can not be protected areas they have generally struggled for lack of funds, management skills and resources.

Jakuls Tourism Board chief Ismail Adlin, who is also WWF Malaysia chief and an avid diver himself, says politics in private approaches are the key to solving these problems.

"After all, conservation is for whom, for what? Of course for biodiversity and ecological processes and so on but most important, it must have direct benefit to the community," he says.

Reuters

Hold those punches ...

From page A1

ultimate boxing as arrested suspects.

The spunk of policemen are less enthusiasm to allow complainants to "hit, slap, bite pull or commit similar acts with impunity against the accused persons," according to a memorandum issued by Chief Supt. Victor Lugay, commander) relation directive.

Lugay said the new directive should be followed even in the absence of the media, whose coverage of police procedures had long been criticized by suspects of violence-condoning suspects.

"We're getting rid of the culture of violence, especially in police stations," Senior Supt. Joel Goltiao, police information officer, told reporters yesterday.

In his memorandum to all policemen, Lugay said allowing violence to persist could eventually erode the confidence that police "do not care or, perhaps, are helpless to apprehend the real perpetrators of human rights and rendering humane service."

Strict policy

He did so in the policy laid down that police must be "compelled" to file charges against victims who will "physically assault" suspects. Officers may likewise be sued for "allowing such act of violence to occur."

"While we do not have to treat criminals with kid gloves, the basic law of the land ... mandates law enforcement officers to protect the rights of everyone, particularly our person accused of committing crimes," Lugay said.

Police and media

What the PNP leadership appears to abhor most are incidents of violence that are caught on video by media people. Such incidents have led to public outrage and calls for the resignation of police officials.

Goltiao said the PNP officials have been observing pulling the hair or digging into the rib area of suspects during press conferences. Some of these scenes have been caught on video.

Also, reporters, photographers and cameramen were not even exempt from the violence. Some of them go to the extent of urging complainants to punch or slap suspects, at times, with whips or a shoe, for us to have packed photo or video.

Emotional outbursts

Two more days, a police inspector survived hanging at a press office in Pasay City. Asked about his leg, he said he injured it while holding a suspect in the nearby police station.

In the announcement, Lugay told police to advise media people not to highlight the "isolated" "emotional outbursts or personal aggression" against suspects. He said such coverage would "destroy the essence of justice the area it is understood.

"On the part of the media, we hope your kindness could also abide by the new policy," Goltiao said.

Debate

The heavens-ended view polemic in the Northern Police District for comments on the w- ere—a request that resulted in the two engaging in debate.

One asserted that criminals deserved to be hit and slapped, and the other stood his ground that suspects were presumed innocent until proven otherwise. What a

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Archives chief shelved; replacement named

From page A1

But last minister—Senate President Franklin Drilon, Sr. come Soon, Manuel Villar and vice presidential candidate Loren Barrillo Legarda—called on Mana yesterday dawn.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile asked the Senate constitutional amendments committee that conducted the inquiry to hold one more hearing to get the side of lawyer Vincenzo Pestano, who had filed two disbarment cases against Mrs. The committee is chaired by Sen. Edgardo Angara, Pres's godsignal political support.

But at a news conference at Bro's restaurant in Ermita, Mana Mr. Manapat insisted that the documents used as basis for the case were authentic, having come from microfilm rolls he himself had discovered at the National Archives.

Great glee

"This couple and former office was manipulated by powerful forces in an unreasonable effort to protect their candidate," he said.

"These powerful forces likewise found great glee in lynching me before the public, as it had made a very credible testimony on the authenticity of the documents before the Comelec two days before."

Mr. Manapat said that a public hearing would be unfortunate to get to the bottom of the forgery claims.

In a statement, Mr. Manapat said, "We shall give serious weight to the final recommendations of the Senate and prosecute any wrongdoers. We will not hesitate to take firm action. So one is above the law."

Bunye said he expected a formal complaint to be filed against Pestano soon after the Senate wrapped up its probe.

Archive employees

Many employees of the Records Management and Archives Office (RMAO) are officially called, some librarians to leave.

More than half of the 130 employees based at the National Library in Manila came to full three to the Senate inquiry on Wednesday to give "moral support" to their colleagues testifying against Manapat.

Wearing their green uniforms, the employees hoisted Manapat.

"Nagkakaisa ang lahat na wag nating gawin ito sa kanya," explained one of the employees, chief of the archives division.

Ignacia and she and her colleagues went to the National Library because "we know what is really happened." She said they wrapped up the Senate to support the officials and staff. But who were called to testify on allegations that Manapat had harassed documents against Pres. All of them requested for work only in the morning and attended the hearing in the afternoon.

Ignacia described Manapat's management style as dictatorial and unfair.

Unpopular

Manapat admitted he was unpopular with his employees and many were angry with him because of the way he disciplined them.

Shelly Ong, lawyer who graduated in the Philippines, magnanimously said, "They have the officer whenever they want, they gamble, they get drunk[illegible]," was how Manapat described the employees of the National Archives, which he first headed in 1986 and returned in 2001.

He said he kicked out 12 staff members during his first term there.

Manapat said 100 people had protested for his ouster in August last year and one of them was Bernard Dalisay, one of the three who blew the whistle on him regarding the five documents.

Unfair treatment

At his news conference, Manapat decried the way he was treated in the Senate inquiry. He said he was not given a chance to explain his side of the story.

"This was apparent from the unease that some members of the Senate identified with HEI had authority and responsibility to subvert the proceedings to the extent of a week's trial of which I was the main target," Manapat said. "At no time did the proceedings assume a semblance of an investigation in aid of legislation."

FVR, Almonte

He told reporters he wanted to ask Senators Angara and Drilon, who is Pres's campaign manager, to inhibit themselves from the inquiry. But he said he also not given the opportunity to raise this when the hearing began the other day.

Manapat also denied Deinedo's claim that he was in cahoots with former President Fidel Ramos and ex-National Security Adviser Jose Almonte in the alleged fabrication of documents against Pres.

Microfilm rolls

Manapat insisted that the microfilm rolls he discovered that contained the marriage contract between Pres's father Ronald Allan and Paulita Gomez and the birth certificate of Pres's father were authentic. He cited the following reasons:

+ They had the appearances of age, as evidenced by the frayed pages, not only of the documents in question but also of all the other documents found in the microfilm roll.

+ The documents were found with other similar documents of the same period and type. The filing, box, birth certificates, for example, were found with other birth certificates from other towns in Pangasinan from the same period. The marriage contract ... was found as an attachment to a notarial record found with other notarial records of the same period and geographic area.

Credible

+ Furthermore, the official letters found at the start of each microfilm roll trace the history of the documents, indicating their origin, thus enhancing the credibility of the microfilm.

Manapat reiterated that he had merely asked the three SA employees in "digitally enhancing" through computer the images of original documents that had been printed from the microfilm readers." With reports from Juliet Javellana and JO Bacquian

Manapat strikes back at 3 archives employees

By Marjorie Ong and Christine O. Avendaño

NATIONAL Archives Director Ricardo Manapat yesterday said he would file perjury cases against Vicelyn Tayag, former Libmanan Cathedral parish priest Fr. Benigno Beltran and Rosario Salvador, after the three archives employees were credited against him in Wednesday's Senate inquiry. The three archives employees were "case supervisor against me ... [and] have tarnished my name and reputation, brought false testimony and perjured and resorted to baseless statements."

Reading a prepared statement, Manapat said the three employees, who are now in the custody of the Senate, were the "very persons who have been instigating all cases against me three months prior.

"Certainly, it is absurd on my part if I had even intention of preparing falsified documents to either the act of individuals who have already filed cases against me," he added.

Manapat even claimed that one of the three "is reportedly investigating us a client from Ex-PFO (Presidential Fact Jr.)." But he did not identify the client.

In his complaint filed before the Pasay Prosecutor's Office, Manapat emphasized that he merely instructed the respondents to enhance the printouts of the microfilm copies of the documents.

"The statements made by the respondents under oath at the Senate hearing on Wednesday since they have recklessly and falsely accused me of falsifying a Philippine passport," he said.

Manapat said he was not a computer technology for alleviated documents, "he said.

"Thus my look at, Wala akong galit kahit kanino. Dam ako at kind of something and I am not angry at anyone," Manapat said.

Meanwhile, a lawyer and separate criminal complaints and libel charges against Pen for "defamation by using a falsified birth certificate and passport application form for the purpose of obtaining a Philippine passport."

In a complaint also filed before the Pasay Prosecutor's Office, lawyers Albert Villaseca and Philonio Elvis Balagtas of Atty. Mendoza is [illegible] Manapat accuses [illegible] Manapat said.

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Who is Ricardo Manapat? Archives chief no stranger to controversy

From page A1

Manapat having known as one to be in the Senate in 1980.

"That's probably his controversy [on the contrary]," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who acknowledged that copies of the book were distributed to the opposition senators.

The senator said the book detailed the wealth of the Marcos conjugal dictatorship. "Although I was not in any way close to him, I knew him as part of the Marcos opposition," he said. Pimentel, who was among those jailed at the height of the dictatorship.

Victim of revolution?

But what happened after that? Pimentel, who was present during Wednesday's Senate hearing on the alleged fabrication of the marriage certificate of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s father, believes that Manapat "is one of the victims of the revolution coming up to children."

Unscrutable?

"I think that he became rich [because he probably thought that he was unscrutable any more]," Pimentel said.

He pointed out that Manapat was appointed by then President Fidel Ramos and reappointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Obviously, if we are talking about loyalties it may be said that he's paying a little of gratitude to his benefactors," Pimentel said.

He said that "sometimes power and reputation brought false testimony and perjured and resorted to baseless statements."

Reading a prepared statement, Manapat said the three employees, who are now in the custody of the Senate, were the "very persons who have been instigating all cases against me three months prior.

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Villaseca

FPJ citizenship issue still valid, says Drilon

Previously A1

rial candidate Fernando Poe Jr. is a natural-born Filipino.

The citizenship issue is a "valid" one, Drilon said, "because the fact (whether) that he was born an illegitimate child of an American mother and then (is) legitimized (by) the effect that an illegitimate child follows the citizenship of the mother."

The popular movie actor was born on Aug. 20, 1939, while his parents, Ronald Allan Poe and Bessie Kelley, were married, a court here in Cebu.

It was Poe's camp which subpoenaed the civil-registry workers here and Kelley to the Commission on Elections, which is hearing a disqualification case against the opposition presidential candidate.

"From the documents submitted, it is quite clear that FPJ was born one year before the marriage between Allan Poe and Kelly was celebrated," Drilon said. "Therefore, he is illegitimate."

He said it was an "interesting question" whether Poe was "legitimized" after the marriage of his parents. "Because what is crucial is on the date of his birth, is he Filipino?" Drilon asked.

"The issue is whether he is a natural-born Filipino and not determined also as the date of birth," he said. "The issue is whether the legitimization commences on the date of birth and, therefore, he becomes a natural-born Filipino."

SC decision

There are "many legal questions" and, thus, a "subject fit for decision by the Supreme Court," Drilon said.

He said he was not aware of any jurisprudence regarding anyone who was legitimized "by virtue of a marriage subsequent to the birth and then legitimization is given a retroactive effect on the status of the child."

That's why he said he found "irrelevant" and "immaterial" the question of the alleged meetings between Poe's father and Ate Paulita Osmeña. This marriage allegedly took place before Poe Sr. married Kelley.

He said this question sought to prove that the marriage between Poe's parents was void and legitimized children between illegitimates.

"But you can show the illegitimacy of Fernando Poe by the fact that he was born before the marriage of his parents took place," Drilon added.

Microfilm files

In Malacañang, Presidential Management Assistant Assistant Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the Palace archives did not have any microfilm files of the statement of marriage between Allan Poe and Bessie Kelley.

Bunye said the Palace archives only had microfilm files of marriages solemnized in Malacañang.

He said Poe's camp had asked for the microfilm files of the marriage between Allan Poe and Bessie Kelley.

"The Palace archives only has microfilm files of marriages solemnized in Malacañang. We have no microfilm files of marriages solemnized outside Malacañang," Bunye said.

1939-1919

Defensor said the case document from Antonio Asistores (Governor Rolando Mesaga) had modified other papers or documents to back him for more than two decades, he said the 1939 documents on Poe's parents should have been dated March 1940.

"If this was solemnized in 1939, that can be checked and there is a microfilm available if the microfilm was a 1939 microfilm. If the microfilm was done only last year or last week, then definitely people were trying to fabricate evidence," Defensor said.

Defensor said Sen. Sergio Osmeña III was on the right track when he questioned the authenticity of the microfilm files.

No straight answers

Defensor also denied that misleading was behind the forgery of Mesaga's actions and said he was not defending Mesaga, according to three unnamed employees. Mesaga was the one behind the forgery.

Defensor expressed disappointment that Mesaga did not know how to answer in the Senate hearings.

"Either he was not given the straight answers. All Mesaga had to say yesterday was 'Ito ang sagot ko, ito ang pinirmahan ko, ito ang sinabi ko,'" he said.

Angara, Sotto

In Congress, Deputy Speaker Antonio Nachura and Majority Floor Leader Edgardo Angara and Minority Senate President Franklin Drilon (L-R) are among the lawmakers who have refused to comment on the citizenship issue of Fernando Poe Jr., who is running for President in the May 10 elections. (Inquirer file photos)

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he would not comment on the issue, should have inhibited himself from the inquiry since Poe was his longtime presidentiable candidate.

Witnesses' credibility

"At the end of the day, the senators will hold sway in the credibility of witnesses and documentary evidence," Gonzales said.

He said that the senators themselves had in the clear favor presumptions under the Rules of Evidence such as "interest in official records made in the Philippines by a public officer in the performance of his duties, especially objections to one are evidence of said duties in fact" (Sec. 44, Rule 130). With reports from Cresencio Balicoco, TJ Burgonio, AP

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Burgonio

Rights workers probing abuses harassed, robbed

LUCENA CITY—Militant human rights workers in Occidental Mindoro were alleged by harassed and robbed by suspected government soldiers in a remote village of Puerto Galera (Calapan) Tuesday, yesterday.

Jenny Corpuz, spokesperson of Karapatan-southern Tagalog, said six heavily armed men wearing fatigues and combat shoes and with faces covered with bonnets, held up at gunpoint at least nine human rights workers and robbed them of their belongings while they were on their way to Manduyong from Mabini.

The victims robbed of their cellular phones, cash, medicines, personal belongings and records of their documentation. Some of the armed men hit one of the members with butts of his rifles," Corpuz said by telephone.

After the assault, she said, the group proceeded to Illumanao and filed complaints at the police station.

She said the incident happened barely 2 km from the nearest checkpoint being manned by elements of the army's 204th Infantry Brigade.

For the past week, unidentified local and military sources involving at least 2,000 military personnel from different Armed Forces units have been staging massive military operations in the vicinity of Bulalo town, 30 km southeast the capital town of Mamburao.

Corpuz identified the group members as Abdul Bacud and Bonifacio Samson from Dasmariñas; Marian Jaulana and Marian Claro from UP-Los Baños; Ester Pacangan and Lyn Ann from Kampanan-Laguna; Jake Ogayon, Cesargo and Imelda Lalandawe from Batangas City.

Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna deputy secretary general, said, "We look at the incidents not as a holdup and robbery episode. It was an outright harassment by the military disguised as a holdup gang. Who would dare stage a daring robbery and bust up victims whose every earner of the premises is heavily militarized?"

"There's a great pattern from the disfiguration and slaying of Ka Eden and Ka Eddie last year," he said.

Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy, both militant human rights workers, were abducted and later killed by hooded-in-Ogies-wearing armed men in Oriental Mindoro last year.

The entire Mindoro island is under siege, there [illegible] radio and newsletter [illegible] for their lives if officials are powerless," De Castro said.

Gen. Jose Villareas pointed to the military as responsible for the purported robbery-holdup. "There are no holdup and robbery going on that area. It's the work of the military. They want to frighten Karapatan and their allied groups," Villareas said in a phone interview. Jaime T. Molino Jr., *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NPA attack forces Chinese firm to stop road project

By Romy C. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The China Road and Bridge Corp. (CRBC) has suspended construction work on a multimillion-peso road project in Negros Oriental after pieces of its equipment were torched by suspected communist rebels in Sta. Catalina town, about 65 km south of here.

"We have to suspend all our construction activities starting today, Jan. 22, 2004 until the security and safety [of] our Chinese and local employees and also to our property [are] completely guaranteed," said Ye Chengzhi, the firm's project manager, in a letter addressed to Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz.

The CRBC is undertaking the asphalting and rehabilitation of the more than 220-kilometer road connecting Dumaguete to the towns of Bacong and Bayawan.

Chengzhi said the project, which costs more than P500 million, started in 2001 and was scheduled to be completed in April this year with what happened, he added that the project's completion would be delayed.

At about 9:40 p.m. of Tuesday, dozen (5 armed men) sneaked down on the company's office compound in Barangay Dagbaylang, Sta. Catalina and disarmed the compound's two security personnel.

Benita Pinto, CRBC assistant personnel in the administration, said the armed men immediately poured gasoline on and set on fire two generator sets, which were installed in a crusher and batch plant. They also burned the base radio installed in the office of the plant.

Glen Alan Flaviano, the firm's office secretary, said the armed men urged for about 20 minutes in the compound before they left on board a van. No one was injured in the attack.

Chengzhi said the rebels were identified themselves to the firm's security guards as NPA members.

"As our main equipment, the asphalt batch plant was extensively damaged and completely paralyzed. It is now impossible for us to resume producing asphalt concrete for the project," he said in his letter to the governor.

In an interview with reporters here, Chengzhi said even if some security personnel were provided the construction firm, the project would still be delayed because the damaged equipment needed to be repaired before work could resume.

Sta. Catalina is one of the five municipalities in the province that have been designated by the communist guerrillas for its peace-free weeks.

Intelligence reports indicated that the guerrillas were conducting their base in Negros Oriental.

Arnaiz said the report indicated that dozens of NPA members from Bohol and Cebu arrived in Zamboanguita town about two weeks ago.

Last week, suspected NPA members torched three buses of the Vallacar Transit in Sitio Canlaon City, Negros Oriental.

THE KING AND THE BISHOP
Asian Fernando Poe Jr., a candidate for President, drops by one of the most respected Church leaders in the country, Archbishop Oscar Cruz, former head of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, during the movie star's visit to Pangasinan, his home province.

Navarette in trouble again in GenSan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The "Bad Boy from Dadiangas" has run into trouble again and this time, he was about to lose his new source of income.

The management of the General Santos City Pub Pool Complex has banned Rolando Navarette from entering the premises of the facility since Monday.

Navarette, former WBC junior lightweight champion, has been frequenting the fish port to buy fish from traders which he sells.

Ed Dejoseleg, fish port manager, pointed out that he imposed the ban on Navarette because the latter is using the premises as a shelter of fish traders to get a cheaper price.

Among the fishing companies that have complained against Navarette's activities were Mar Anders Fishing, RS Fishing, Reel Fishing and MCTB Fishing.

But the former boxing idol denied the accusation of nonpayment as he had bulked anybody inside the fish port.

Despite the ban, Navarette insisted on entering the fish port and openly figured in a fist fight with a policeman.

After the incident, Navarette lodged a complaint against PO1 Joe Calandria because the policeman allegedly pointed a gun at him.

Calandria said he was just defending himself.

Depending solely with Calandria, stating the policeman was only doing his job, Subdist. Chief, PSupt. **Mindanao Bureau**

Teachers demand more pay, protection to serve in polls

DAVAO CITY—Teachers in the city are demanding P500,000 in death benefits coverage and other benefits should they be tapped again for the May 10 elections.

Adds Jose Sol, the teachers are also demanding an increase in their honoraria and legal assistance funds in the event of election controversies.

And if they get sick, the teachers are also asking that the government pay for their hospitalization bills.

Alcindoro Bolac, president of the Davao City Public Teachers' School Teachers Association (DCPSTA), said almost 10 percent of the total 6,700 teachers and staffers in the city's schools do not want to serve in the national and local elections anymore.

Bolac said some teachers have become apprehensive about serving in the elections because of their past experiences.

But he said many teachers are still willing to serve during the elections but on condition they be given more protection during the conduct of the polls.

"They take the risk especially those assigned in critical areas. Teachers should be provided enough protection necessary and non-monetary," he told reporters.

Bolac said the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Department of Education (DepEd) should provide lawyers to assist teachers when election cases are filed against them.

"In previous elections, teachers had shelled out their own money to defend themselves from election-related cases," he said.

Teachers get naïve law of the during elections, especially if election results are contested.

Lizie Angeles, director of the Commission on Elections in Southern Mindanao, said the teachers should make for their legal requests.

"This is the time to make the necessary recommendation so these in the higher ups (sic) would know the sentiments of (the teachers)," Angeles said.

Normal Bolac, education director in the region, said he already sent word to the DepEd central office about the teachers' demands particularly the increase in the honoraria. Anthony S. Alfalla, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

14 Calabarzon cops awarded for busting robbery gang

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—For their successful operation against a band of highway robbers preying on businessmen in Calabarzon, 14 members of the Quezon police officers were given the "Medalya ng Kagalingan" (PNP Merit Award) in simple ceremonies held at camp on Wednesday.

Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Reynaldo Natalia said Supt. Teodito Bajarlo, SPO4 Jose Fernando, SPO2 Generoso Estrella Jr., SPO2 Eladio Mario, SPO2 Fiorello Rivera and nine other junior officers were behind the dismantling of the Abel Ingalacan Group, a notorious gang of highway robbers based in Batangas and Quezon.

Natalia said the members handled a particular operation against the group members after they allegedly held up a 10-wheel truck owned by the Purico Biomass Corp. and took its cargo Oct. 15 along the New Diversion Road in Barangay Maddela, Pagbilao town.

The operations led to the recovery of the truck and the arrest of alleged group leader Abel Ingalacan, Jonathan Panlilio and two other suspects.

Recovered from their possession were two handguns and a shotgun.

He said the policemen's "gallantry in the line of duty truly deserves recognition" from the national police organization.

"This is also one way of assuring the business sector that their investments are safe here in Calabarzon," Natalia said in the ceremony attended by mayors of different towns in the region. Marlon Ramos, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Florante Caedo, sculptor of landmarks, dies at 64

Caedo

By Uro B. Zubiaga

FLORANTE B. Caedo, sculptor of the famous Tandang Sora and Emilio Aguinaldo shrines in Cavite, Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan City, the Quezon Memorial Park in Quezon City and other large-than-life sculptures around the country, died last Tuesday. He was 64.

Caedo's family said he was on a work on a number of commissions when he had a bad slip in April. The final cause never healed. In September, he was diagnosed with cancer of the bone.

Before he died, the artist, art group and artist Romeo Rego, his friend, were organizing an exhibit of small works to introduce Caedo to younger generations.

The sculptor's body lies at the Funeraria Nacional on Aurora Avenue, Quezon City. He will be buried on Jan. 25 at 3 p.m. at the Holy Cross Memorial Park in Quezon City.

Caedo was the natural heir to Guillermo T. Caedo, who helped Nacional Artist Guillermo Tolentino in a number of landmark works such as the UP Oblation and the Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan City. The young Caedo himself assisted his father and Tolentino in executing the City of Pagadian Commemoration in Mindanao.

Tolentino and the elder Caedo were faculty colleagues at the UP School of Fine Arts and were pioneers of the classical movement in Philippine sculpture. The young Caedo followed the influence the himself became an accurate teacher to his father and when he struck out on his own, became known for representational works that breathed human and larger than life spirit.

Perhaps the work that is how associated with Florante Caedo were the tableaux he did for the 1 Hundred Philippine Centennial Park consisting of dramatic and very faithful renderings of Tandang Sora, the "grandmother" of the Philippine revolution against Spain, and Emilio Jacinto, "the brains of the revolution."

Another very visible work of Caedo is the Boy Scout monument on Timog Circle, Quezon City.

SUERTRES 4 2 8
SIX DIGIT (No winners on draw) 2 5 9 7 1 6

SUPERLOTTO 6/49 14 25 33 36 43 49

Cops pick up 4 men for Chinoy's murder

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THE POLICE investigating the abduction and murder of businessman Jose Luis Chinoy have arrested four suspects, including a woman.

Information on the arrests gathered by the Inquirer was confirmed by Director Avelino Razon Jr., Central Luzon Police Office director Rolando de Leon adding that he refused to give further details.

Dr. Lewis said fabricated one of the suspects, including the alleged mastermind, was still ongoing.

He added that the suspects would be presented to the media later today.

Caloocan City Police Intelligence and Investigation Branch chief Dionisio Santiago also refused to give information as he said that they were still in the Malacañan area conducting follow-up operations.

The arrests came after police questioned a woman who is allegedly connected to the group that killed Jun.

City police chief Benjamin Mendoza said the matter was probably robbery.

Car thieves in uniform hit trader

ARMED Un-fly on Wednesday night till perry in an armed men in police uniform who stopped him at a checkpoint at the boundary of Quezon City and Caloocan City.

Uy, 30, of Sapang, Manila, was still shaking when he reported the incident to the Caloocan police.

But the police appealed to be contacted as effectively as the Caloocan since the incident happened at the boundary of the two cities.

Uy was later referred to the Caloocan Police District, where he told authorities that he was flagged down by two men in police uniform (2) fired near the in Quezon Caloocan at around 7:30 p.m.

Thinking that it was a checkpoint, Uy pulled up in his maroon Toyota Revo (NFW-882). But when he opened the car door, one of the suspects shot him in the back and left, took over the steering wheel, while the other suspects also boarded the victim's car, police said.

The suspects then took the victim's cash and valuables amounting to P30,000, police said.

The suspects then dumped the victim on Infanta Street in Balut, Tondo, Manila, before they sped away taking with them the victim's vehicle. Tina Santos

DOH MODERNIZATION PLAN

Marikina hospital faces budget slash

By Luige del Puerto

FIRST, the good news: The Amang Rodriguez Medical Center (AMRC) in Marikina City is set to get new and top of the line medical equipment for its operations.

The bad news: The hospital may lose 82 percent of its 2022 million annual budget and be left with only P4 million—not enough to be hospital to operate properly and use the modern equipment.

Worse, the budget slash may relegate Amang Rodriguez as a mere emergency and outpatient clinic, gravely affecting the delivery of medical services to poor and marginalized citizens who make up the bulk of the hospital's patients.

In an interview, Dr. Roland Ferrer, ARMC director, said he had been lobbying to represent a move of the Department of Health and had acted concerns over the serious effects of a budget cut.

The representative of the DOH, which is handling allocation for ARMC, promised to seek a smaller reduction in the hospital's funding.

But Amang Rodriguez's staff, who would keep the brunt of a severely reduced budget, are not reassured.

"We are demoralized," Dr. Cesar Montano, president of the Alliance of Health Workers-AHRC Chapter, said.

He explained, "The hazard pay that we receive is only 10 percent of our salary over when our magia sacla says we should be getting 25 percent. And now they're planning to cut it altogether?"

Should the planned cut push through, the hospital's 500 staff would only get their hazard pay—based pay and subsistence allowance—up to April or May, Cortez said.

Her assistant, Amy Magno, a dental aide, said she would lose her 15,000 monthly from her salary.

The 200-bed capacity hospital would also have to let go of its contracted and, janitorial security staff. That would leave the clean of sisters wards and prompt On Coming away of patients to other hospitals.

To retrieve, the ARMC would have to raise its fees, which currently amount to 20 percent of the total hospital bill.

Most of its patients are poor who come from marginalized communities in Marikina and Rizal.

The DOH is reportedly proposing the cut to raise 0.14 million as a counterpart fund for the Female Personnel Project.

Under the project, AHRC would receive top-of the line hospital equipment from the French government.

Since the start of the project in 1997, the AHRC has received worldwide of equipment. It is scheduled to get a third delivery soon.

"But would rather not get the third delivery of the French equipment than go through the budget cut," Cortez said.

Justice feels heat of City Hall blaze

By Tarra Quismundo and Leila Salaverria

A FIREMAN sets out to tackle the blaze that hit the Mla Universe RTV, a popular radio hub in Pasay City on Tuesday night. The following night, fire again broke out in the office of a Manila trial court in City Hall. PHOTO BY RICHARD VISCONDE

THE DELIVERY of justice had to wait yesterday as workers and employees of the Manila City Hall cleaned up the mess left by a fire that hit a courthouse late Wednesday night.

Although only the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 42 at the third floor of the left wing of the building was hit by the blaze, there were no decisions or most rooms on that side of City Hall.

Consequently, hearings had to be reset and clerical work is monotonous and the city hall gay office were held off for another day.

At 10:45 p.m. the other night, fire believed caused by faulty electrical wiring started inside the sala of Judge Bernelito Fernandez.

Customers waiting for a ride along Taft Avenue saw smoke coming out of the room and informed the City Security force, which called the Bureau of Fire Protection.

Firemen had to make several unsuccessful of fire hose to reach the third floor in order to reach the fire.

The blaze destroyed computers, tables and countless court records placed at the mezzanine of the office. Arson investigators pegged the damage at P100,000.

But the fire spared much of Fernandez's courtroom which was adjacent to where the fire reportedly started.

Fernandez, in an interview yesterday, said that he has yet to determine how much of their court records were destroyed in the blaze.

Branch 44 is a regular court that do not handle heinous crimes.

In a more prominent case was the conviction of then Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

TOS Candelario Magallona, the investigator handling the case, said employees reported that a new power outlet had just been installed at the spot where the fire started.

MetroBriefs

3 to stay suspects charged

ANTIQUE officials have filed charges of kidnapping for ransom and robbery against the 17 suspects in the abduction and killing of Dora Lita executive Sheriff Ilot by last November. Judge Marietta Lourdes of Regional City Regional Trial Court Branch 9 will be presiding over the case of Romeo Escalona, Romeo Clemente, Florencio Pallacar and Lorenzo Calderon. The four are being held at the Police Intel Group Command's Response unit's detention cell in Camp Crame. Also charged were John Daniel Alcaraz and Rolly Marcelo Gonzaga, members of the custody of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group. Charges were also filed against Rodolfo Odiaua, Cesar Macaraig Jr., Gerardo Zamora, Raoul Victoriano and Rodolfo Ernest Tanate. Dora Pronacecider Cortes-Tolentino recommended further investigation of Justice Lauron, Raoul Victoriano, Ruben Ancheta, Jesus Magbitang, Alexander Wilde, Dely Bernal, Leo Galido, Perlas de Negro and Cesar Ermala. Tina Santos

2 collared for killing cop

POLICE have arrested Ernel Quindao, 23, Fermin Dacuna, 19, Dennis Rosa, 35, Michael Lucero, 27, and Michael Bodion, 31, all residents of Barangay Santolan, Pasig City, for allegedly killing PO3 Primitivo Tadifan, 28, on Wednesday night. City police chief Senior Supt. Leonardo Calunsag said Tadifan, 28, a member of the city police, was killed for telling the suspects to refrain from making too much noise while they were having a drink. Police are also looking for two more suspects—Rodolfo "Fido dog" Dacuna and Lolibeth. Leila del Puerto

APB fellowship

THE ALPHA Phi Beta Chancery will hold its monthly fellowship today at 6 p.m. at the Epiphany Church of the Manila Polo Club in Forbes Park, Makati City. The affair will be hosted by lawyer Hon. A. Lynda The Chancery is composed of alumni members of the Alpha Phi Beta Fraternity of the University of the Philippines.

Columns tower launched

TOMTOP-3, the latest of the three towers of The Columns, Ayala Avenue, will be launched today at the Grandball Lobby by the Management Association of the Philippines. It is in collaboration with Ayala Land which developed the office and residential properties. These towers rested in Sampaloc and at Times Corner Hill. Call 813-0411 to 7504084, email ace@columnsmanagement.com.ph or visit www.columnsphilippines.com.ph.

QC extends tax deadline

QUEZON City officials have extended the deadline for the payment of business taxes from Jan. 20 to Jan. 31. A city official said that they had to extend the tax collection period to accommodate taxpayers heading the City Treasurer's office.

Baseco couple rapped for arson

TWO COUPLE who owns the house where the devastating nine-hour Baseco Compound fire started has been charged with arson before the Manila City Prosecutor's Office.

Rhealite Bonifio, 32, and his wife Rosejael, 30, were each charged with one count of conflagration.

Senior Insp. Rafael Bilbao, chief of the arson division of the Bureau of Fire Protection in Manila, said that they based the charges on the statements of six of the couple's neighbors.

Earlier, the couple had sought police protection because of fears of retaliation from their neighbors at the Baseco Compound in Port Area, Manila.

According to Bilbao, the neighbors feared the Bonifios quarrelling three hours before the fire started. During the fight, Rosejael threatened to set to fire the husband's clothes.

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Rhealite Bonifio was a nearby store, the neighbors saw that his house was on fire. Rosejael was never running out of the house.

Prosecutor also told investigators that they saw some of the furniture belongings burning on top of the bed.

Bilbao said that the prosecutors have sent samples of ash and evidence before from the Examiner's house to the National Bureau of Investigation for analysis. Results are expected sometime next week. Leila Salaverria, Reynaldo Santos

'Pig holiday' chops up pork supply

By Christine Sapilan

WHAT! No pork!

It may be due to the "pig holiday" declared by the Manila Archdiocese that long-time pork lovers of the group headed by its president Benito Ahcosta, archbishop of the daughterhouse in Vitas, Tondo.

In his homily, secretary-general by Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo, assured the meat traders that their concerns would be addressed and therefore prices would be low soon.

The assurance prompted the association to abort the "pig holiday," which means that they would resume pork supply today.

However, Ahcosta told the buyers that 60 to 80 percent of wet markets in the metropolitan might not have pork to sell this morning.

He explained that this morning's meat supply should have been slaughtered as early as yesterday afternoon. But since the morning with the Peruvians took place late yesterday, there was no longer any time to prepare for the delivery.

But Ahcosta assured meat buyers that there would be normal supply of pork all over Metro Manila in the afternoon.

100 soldiers to secure fire-stricken compound in Manila

By Alcuin Papa

MILITARY officials yesterday said that they have deployed 100 soldiers to the Baseco Compound in Manila, Manila—site of a device razing fire on Jan. 15—to prevent the intrusion of illegal squatters and protect the relief workers in the area.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces of the Philippines Public Information Office chief, yesterday said that aside from protecting the relief workers, the soldiers would also secure the military equipment of the engineering battalion that has been building temporary shelters for the fire-victims in the area.

According to Manila's social welfare department, the relief workers are still in the Baseco Compound and have not been pulled out of the area.

A city social welfare official told the Inquirer over the telephone that the workers are still providing aid for the fire victims.

Last Saturday, social worker Maria Hadia Gilbuena was shot and killed while she was giving relief goods to the fire victims.

Suspect Nestor Cauyan has already been arrested and charged in connection with the shooting.

Lucero said that Maj. Gen. Alberto Braganza of the 403 National Capital Region Command has sent units from the 6th Infantry Battalion to secure the compound.

"They are there purposely to help the police in preventing the intrusion of squatters who are not actually victims of the fire, and we will see to it that only the real victims will be included in the relocation," Lucero said.

"There will be people who would be taking advantage of the situation because they know that there will be unanimous coming from the government," Lucero said. "There people would like to grab a share of the support, even though they are not actual victims of the recent fire."

Today, a visit from the U.S. Engineering Battalion had arrived in the area to help in the rescue situation.

The Jan. 15 fire at the Baseco Compound in Manila was the worst to hit in the area in three years. 4,300 families were left homeless, while P46 million worth of property was destroyed.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2004 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

ADB sees 4.5% growth for RP in 2004

By Dodo C. Dantino

THE PHILIPPINE economy will grow by 4.5 percent this year despite political uncertainty linked to May's presidential election, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said yesterday.

ADB country director Thomas Gronick said that businessmen would likely take a "wait-and-see attitude" while awaiting the results of the May 10 vote.

If there is a "clear decision" in the balloting, this will reassure investors, allowing the gross domestic product (GDP) to rebound in the second half of the year to about 4.5 percent, he said at an economic forum.

However, he stressed that the level of growth was too little "to make substantive inroads in poverty reduction," considering the country's population growth rate of 2.36 percent, one of the highest in Asia.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who made optimistic, predicting that GDP growth would at least hit 4.5 percent.

Neri hindered the ADB for its tendency to underestimate the Philippines' growth prospects, which he said was certainly not helpful to business confidence.

Speaking before the ADB-Asian Institute of Management Network Conference last Wednesday, the country's top economic planner urged the bank to improve its economic forecasting model.

"They need a little sharpening of their pencils. "Their total ceiling time for Manila-based development bank's economic projections were always at least half a percentage point lower than the government's targets.

For 2003, the ADB had projected that the country's gross domestic product would grow by 4 percent. Neri said growth last year likely hit 4.5 percent or better, consistent with the government's target range of 4.2-5.2 percent.

The ADB's 4.5-percent GDP growth projection for 2004 was again lower than the government's target of 4.5-5.5 percent.

Neri stressed that the ADB's outlook sometimes influenced foreign investors. He noted that non-specialists consider ADB, like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, too much vocal on its economic research output.

The ADB conducts a quarterly review of regional growth prospects and publishes its predictions in its Asian Development Outlook.

But said that 2004 would be better than last year because agriculture and exports were both expected to recover.

He also said official development assistance would boost the

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NOVEMBER LEVEL

Public debt up 17.5%

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S outstanding public debt reached P3.159 trillion in November, up by 17.45 percent from P2.691 trillion a year ago and 1.17 percent higher than P3.12 trillion in the previous month.

The debt stock ranged from 2003 was on at P3.090 billion while the end-2004 ranges was higher at P3.167.

In November, the government raised P204 million from the three-year bond auction. It earned P1.04 billion in long-term bonds while the issue of bond borrowed P400 million for 91-day money.

Government obligations increased for about 10 percent or P2.8-3 million of the total debt stock of P3.161 trillion (as of end-2003).

The overall debt as of November 2004 did not show P700 billion contingent liabilities or guarantees covering debts of certain government agencies and private businesses.

In November, the foreign debt stood at P1.641 million (US$28.462 billion) against P1.614 million (equivalent to $28.195 billion) in the previous month.

The peso continued to depreciate in November and the government used an exchange rate of P56.79 to $1 while the rate as of October-end was P56.39 to $1.

Domestic obligations were slightly up to P1.52 million from P1.51 trillion in October. Contingent debt in November stood at P504.09 billion, higher than the P496.57 billion the previous month.

The level of contingent debt had increased substantially in 2003, indicating a dangerous amount of sovereign guarantees that the government had extended to state agencies as well as the private sector.

The government maintained that the current shared outstanding debt would likely swell to about P7 trillion in the next five years.

About 80 percent of the country's debts will mature in about the next years and only 13 percent will fall due in a year.

The country's rising public debt is one of the reasons why Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings have downgraded their ratings on Philippine borrowings.

Deal on Aurora power plant OKd

MANILA Power Corp. has awarded to a local firm the contract to build a P97 million power plant in the city province.

In an interview, a Mapecor official said Hamilton said the energy and Regulated Commission and Development Corp. agreed to do the project for P97.6 million (P100,000 less than the budget).

The contractor will be responsible for the site development as well as the installation and commissioning of a 2 megawatt diesel-fired power plant in Concepcion, Tarlac.

The new power plant will be an addition to the existing 1,140 kW diesel run facility in the same town.

The contract requires the government to put up the new facility within 180 days.

The project also calls for the installation of two 500 kilowatt generators and the construction of related plant equipment.

The expansion of the Concepcion plant is one of the projects that Aurora's Special Power Utilities Group had lined up for possible handing by the Aglipay government under the Sponsored Philippines Project. Entered in shortage

WRIST BP MONITOR

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FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Alyansa Agrikultura's agenda

By Ernesto M Ordoñez

ITWAS on Jan. 21, 2003, in simple ceremonies in Quezon City, that Alyansa Agrikultura was launched. Unlike its umbrella, more the federations of small farmers and fisherfolk organizations with more than one million members nationwide, its main objective was to be the united voice of small farmers and fisherfolk, which represent the largest sector in the economy.

Following the concept of building consensus among constituencies, they believed that they should not depend solely on government to drive agitation for reforms, they should unite and work for the common cause they championed themselves. They would then influence the government to do not when government officials may want to do it on their own, but when the farmers and fisherfolk say they want.

Background

In 2002, the farm community was preparing for Alyansa Agrikultura's launching, small farmers and fisherfolk organizations were increasing knowledge brought about by the rapid trade liberalization in agriculture, which they could no longer produced with the resources, they were also opposed very rapid conversion of lands, because it, the power interest in rural areas that they would be provided with safety nets and compensation, infrastructure investments that would enable them to withstand the onslaughts of agricultural imports with the devastating results.

The sugar and rice industries are known interest industries were cases. Farmers in the countryside became aware about some of the ones in search of a better future, only to increase the misery of the unemployed. As a result, some of the farmers have significantly in the countryside.

Government neglect

The small farmers and fisherfolk felt they were being taken for granted. Many believed they were receiving crumbs from the P192 billion in loans and aid that the P1.8 billion for marketing support mandated by the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) had been given. In fact, the marketing support component given to all four organizational units of the Department of Agriculture (DA) under that landmark measure is only P68 million. The bulk of the alleged P1.8 billion for marketing support was consumed by the Land Bank loans to cronies, which would have been given to farmers even without the AFMA law. The allocations for DA budget increased as he continued, during the decision to fund the farmers with the onslaught of cheap agricultural imports because of the lowest tariffs.

COMMENTARY

The response

The wind 2003 saw the farmers beginning to agricultural sub-sectors making into national federations and coalitions. The following organizations were formed in consultations with DA undersec. Conrado Estrella III: Bukidnon Government (UGB) for the coconut industry while PhilMaize united all the corn farmers across the country; Bikolnon Bukidnon Federation consolidated under the following Mindanao-wide. While other sub-sectors had not yet organized nationally such as the rice farmers and the vegetable growers, the sub-sectors that were already organized decided to bond together with other national farmers organizations such as the Federation of Free Farmers and Pakisama who were also trying to unite with a common voice. Then was born the Alyansa Agrikultura.

A year later

Last October, Jan. 27, the Alyansa had a day-long conference. A year after its founding, several core players were seen. The Rice Farmers had been organized into the National Rice Farmers Council, as had the Confederation reportedly growers. The leaders of farmers groups such as the National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. (NFHF) and the Inland Bodies Farmers Association (Ifarm) were present. So were other non-supporters, such as non-governmental organizations like Kilusan praising farmers with regional movements like the Philippine Peasant Institute. Together, they represent a broad and potent movement force.

Common agenda

That day, all these leaders agreed on a common agriculture agenda. This agenda, though addressed to the major agricultural issues, gives special attention to small farmers and fisherfolk. It is the culmination of year-long consultations held throughout the country. It is summarized in a three-page document also with more detailed documents annually.

An important feature of this agenda is that every item for the consensus response of its leaders. Differences or problems will still be addressed by the different organizations in respective activities, but there will not be associated with the Alyansa. It is a statement for clear thinking the conditions, most of the problems were consistently supported. This provides a mechanism that there is only a common agriculture left by the agriculture sector that the government has not been addressing. But of the issues may be that there has not been a strong, united and common voice for agriculture so far.

Next steps

In the next few days, the agenda will be presented to and discussed with the presidential candidates. The issues will be done with other national and local candidates. The presidential this agenda will be an important basis for the farmers and fisherfolk votes. The agenda should also be used as a guide in measuring the performance of those who will eventually get elected.

But regardless of elections, the Alyansa is now a united front representing a common agriculture sectors agenda. With this unprecedented strength in unity, it intends to move both the private and public sectors to

to Alyansa on

ADB ...

ABS CBN

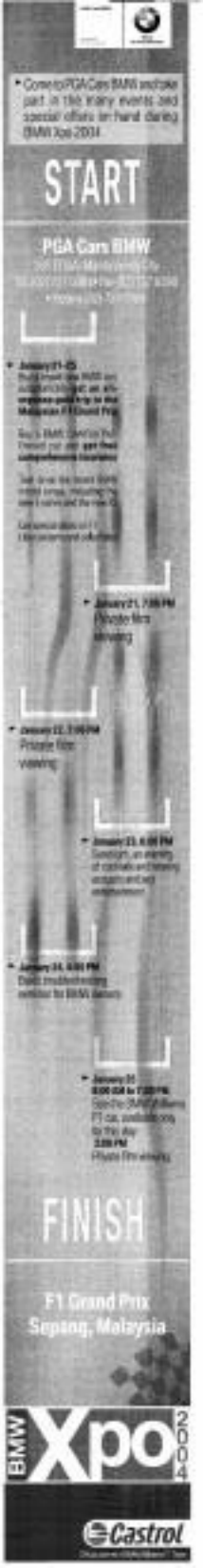
NOTICE TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation is currently in the process of updating its shareholder records. If you have changed address and/or have not been receiving notices of the Company's meetings as well as annual reports for the past five years, it is possible that your registered address with the Company has not been updated. To ensure that your address is properly updated, kindly send us a duly signed letter request together with a photocopy of your valid identification cards to our stock and transfer agent, as follows/matter:

Securities Transfer Services, Inc.
6th Floor Rampres Building, Exchange Road
Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605
Tel Nos. 633-51-60 to 66
Fax No. 631-71-65
Attention: Mr. Angelo D. Bautista

We look forward to receiving your letter.

(Sgd.) RAMON F. ESPINELLI
Vice President & CFO



Meralco completes 3 projects

By Conrad M. Cornelio

(THE) PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday said it had completed three more projects under its 24.7-billion capital investment program for 2003.

"Although we cannot deny that we are experiencing financial constraints, our primary concern is still to keep our service at par with our customers' expectations," Meralco vice president Elpi Cuna said.

The three projects, which were completed in the second half of December, included:

- the construction of the first phase of a new 56.5-kilovolt feeder from the Cubao substation, which was intended to provide additional capacity for existing customers in Murphy and Libis, Quezon City;
- the relocation of a portion of a feeder from the Rockwell substation, which would allow utility personnel easy access to distribution facilities during maintenance works and reduce power interruption times; and
- the third phase of the extending of a 13.8-kV Angeli feeder, which would improve voltage regulation and system loss.

Besides the three projects, Meralco has also completed 16 related projects, namely:

- two 115-kV substation-to-substation line property upgrading in Cubao and towns of Bulacan, Nasug Nasug, Mandaluyong and Taguig;
- four substation projects in Bulacan, Cavite, Quezon City and Laguna; and
- four distribution line projects in Quezon City, Bulacan and Quezon province.

Meralco has reported tight cash flows due to its inability to raise its rates and due to a multi-billion refund to customers, for which it had shelled out at least 3% billion in the past six months.

Company officials said 42 projects had been put on hold because of the cash flow problems.

The utility had raised hopes of addressing its financial constraints when the Energy Regulatory Commission granted its last November a provisional authority to raise rates by an average of 12 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

Jardine inks property deal with BDO

BDO Unibank Inc. has entered into a joint venture deal with Jardine Properties Inc. to develop the bank's 27,870-square-meter property in Cubao, Quezon City.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, BDO spokesperson Elmer Serrano said the property would be developed by Jardine into a residential enclave.

Jardine Properties will conduct a due diligence study of the property after which BDO and Jardine Properties will execute a development management agreement specifying the terms and conditions of their arrangement, Serrano said.

BDO, with resources of P330.5 billion, the banking arm of shopping mall tycoon Henry Sy is the country's third largest bank in terms of assets.

BDO has a binding agreement to acquire the 29-percent controlling stake held by the state-run pension fund Social Security System in Equitable PCI Bank. Bank C. Jardine

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DISCLOSURES

ABAUD, Pangilinan, president and chief operating officer of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., bought 1,000 shares of the company at P501.50 each.

* * *

ACDC Alliance Inc. temporarily ceased its electronics manufacturing operations due to uncertainties in market conditions. Also, it changed its business address to Building 6314, Subic International Airport, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales.

* * *

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. disclosed the resignation of Marilou Heruela as director of the company.

* * *

MACAHIYAS' Pandoc Inc. denied having any intention to explore the 40-percent drop in its share price that took from P2 to P1.20 each.

* * *

VICTORIA'S Milling Co. Inc. approved the application for reinstatement of Carolina Diaz as controller and corporate information officer. Replacing her as corporate information officer is Teresita Ragas.

A. SORIANO Corp. 1,500,000 shares were purchased by its wholly owned subsidiary, Anscor Consolidated Corp. Compiled by Marlon D. Salvio, PDI Research

PDIC bails out PBCom

THE PHILIPPINE Deposit Insurance Corp. has agreed to lend P7.4 billion to one percent-a-year borrower to Philippine Bank of Communications, according to sources familiar with the negotiations.

At the same time, PBCom's three major shareholders have been required to put in an additional P5 billion to bring the bank's capital ratios back to the required level.

The P7.4-billion government facility will be placed by PBCom in government securities and pledged as collateral to PDIC. But the interest rate differential (a Government source can pocket, will accrue to PBCom as income eventually.

In addition, payment of the PDIC loan has been stretched out to 10 years.

In return for the PDIC help, the Chinoy bank has agreed to conduct its board to 11 members to allow the entry of four PDIC nominees. Moreover, at least one PDIC nominee will sit in PBCom's powerful executive committee.

The PDIC package also calls for PBCom to set up a special purpose vehicle where it will offload its nonperforming loans portfolio. PBCom has the option to recapture the nonperforming loans portfolio. PBCom has the option to recapture the nonperforming loans, now reduced to about P9 billion, after 12 years, if they have not been disposed of by then.

According to the grapevine, the PDIC gave the go-ahead for the PBCom plan before Christmas, and that is why PBCom is calling for a special stockholders' meeting on Feb. 18 to approve the recapitalization and the increase in board representation.

SSS taps outside adviser

THE SOCIAL Security System has hired MM+ASIRI's (sounds) services to hire Iggy Islandes to give an independent opinion of the proposed 300 divestment from Equitable PCIBank.

Aside from its grapevine, Islandes has been attending the last three board meetings of the SSS board to analyze the terms of the proposed Banco de Oro's acquisition of the 20 percent SSS stake in EPCIB.

Also present in the meetings were SSS officials led by president Peter Tan, as well as key SSS fund managers.

Apparently, the role of the broker-adviser seeking is to allow even the senior management of SSS to examine the financial execution of the putative deal, said sources familiar with the SSS ranks for missing insider trading opportunities to had rampantly happened during the Ramos years.

Despite the anonymous opposition now surfacing from within columnists, no financial group has so far come forward to push or even bribe the SSS office, noted former Finance Undersecretary now-SSS director Romeo Bernardo.

Bernardo admitted he had opposed SSS president George de la Paz-controlled investment group Kloeppe Bentley in the hope of acquiring the SSS lot to EPCIB.

But, Bernardo added, De la Paz just laughed him off after he informed her that his US principal was only willing to pay "market price" for the SSS lot.

Billionaire for GMA

NEW York-based peso billionaire Linda Nicolas-Lewis has formally committed to help the GMA campaign.

According to the grapevine, Lewis has struck up an alliance with the group of former Makati Vice Mayor Counsilliar Nelly Bernardo to target and win over the A and B crowd, especially those that have moved over to the Ayes camp.

Lewis, like Boots, hails from Iloilo.

Bernardo, on the other hand, is the better half of the GMA-appointee ambassador to Spain, Joseph Dolano Bernardo.

Heard through the grapevine

PHILIPPINE Ambassador to the United Kingdom Edgardo Espiritu has denied bribery can be supplied by ownership of Philippine News, as has until the May elections.

The Jose Francisco-based newsdaily, which enjoys additional working capital, was scouring for new investors in the last quarter of the year.

Email: cocktales_philstar@yahoo.com or cocktales_ga@philstar.com.

ADB allots $290M in loans for RP

By Boots C. Ocampo

THE ASIAN Development Bank has committed $290 million in fresh loans for the Philippines this new year in support of the government's development priorities, the bank's country director, Thierry de Saint, said.

At the sidelines of the ADB-Asian Institute of Management Partnership Conference, Grandstand debate of the lending program for 2004 would be announced as a press briefing next week.

"We have identified eight projects for this year," he said.

The lending assistance programmed by the multilateral lender for this year is higher than the $194-million in actual lending implemented last year.

Crunch said the bank's lending level fluctuated every year and that there was no significant reason for the increase in the budget for this year save 2004. Mr. Saint also welcomed the clean-up in the government's official development assistance (ODA) portfolio.

The country's ODA disbursement rate surged to 95 percent last year from only 74 percent in 2001 and 76 percent in 2002.

Disbursement rate is a proxy indicator for physical accomplishment of a project. A 50-percent rate means that 50 percent of the scheduled loan disbursement had been spent.

For 2002-2004, the ADB had set its indicative planning figure of $300 million in new loans for the Philippines for each year. Its commitments was scaled down from $350 million in 2000, taking into account disbursement performance and absorptive capacity.

The ADB's assistance to the country, which is aligned with the Medium-Term Philippine Development Program, aims to reduce poverty, promote equity, improve social services delivery, protect the environment, and promote good governance.

Korean tourists flocking to Clark; Asiana adds flights

WITH the arrival of more foreign tourists, especially from South Korea, businesses in the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) are thriving these days, Clark Development Corp. president Emmanuel Angeles said.

In a report received by Angeles, dean is 5,000 Korean tourists have arrived in Clark since the inaugural flight of Asiana Airlines on Oct. 20 last year with two flights a week at present. Asiana has three flights a week which are scheduled full weekend even before the Christmas holidays.

At the same time, Thomas Gist of the Daily Tours in South Korea told Angeles that starting Feb. 2, Asiana Airlines will add two more flights, bringing the total flights for the week starting next month.

Gist, according to Angeles, was mainly responsible for the increase of the Korean tourists to Clark.

Angeles said business establishments, including enterprises at the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) and golf courses in the area, were kept busy by the increased weekly charter flights of Asiana Airlines.

The additional flights, according to Asiana's regional manager in the Philippines, Ryoun E. Kim, was due to the bigger number of Korean tourists going to the Philippines, especially to Clark.

Earlier, Asiana decided to upgrade the size of its aircraft in its regular flights to and from Clark and Seoul from its Airbus A321 which has a 277-passenger capacity, to a Boeing 737 with a seating capacity of 279.

Asiana has regular flights from the Incheon International Airport in Seoul to Ibn Dandadu Mangat International Airport every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

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BIGGER LOAN PORTFOLIO

Banks' NPL ratio down to 14.8%

By Gloria S. Batino

THE BSP said loans to total loan ratio has dropped to 14.8 percent in November from 15.12 percent a month ago, as the expansion in loan portfolio outpaced the impact of an increasing level of non-performing loans.

The total loan portfolio went up by 1.1 percent to P1.71 trillion from P1.67 trillion in October. The NPLs of the country's universal banks and commercial banks rose by almost 4 percent or P5.64 billion from P150.2 billion.

The November figure indicates a gradual improvement in the banks' balance sheet. A year ago, the NPL ratio stood at 16.1 percent.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the total loan ratio had improved due to a more aggressive loan collection by the universal banks and commercial banks.

Although the banks' NPLs had declined from a peak of almost 19 percent two years ago to the current level, the central bank was still worried that the banks had not been making full advantage of the Special Purpose Vehicle Act to reduce their bad loans and foreclosed assets. The SPV law had provided tax incentives to NPL sales and, still eager in May 2003...

Some banks have been selling their assets individually. The Monetary Board has so far approved the disposal of more than P6 billion worth of assets.

A year ago, the NPLs stood at P260.66 billion, which already reflected the removal of about P30 billion worth of accounts that were fully reserved.

Restructured loans worth P131.10 billion were taken out of the NPL folder as of November, down from P133.96 billion in the previous month but higher than P127.28 billion a year ago.

Interest accounts went up to P300.149 billion from P6.94 (?? billion in October and P277.02 billion in the year-ago level. Together with the NPL, the foreclosed assets or Regmi level and other properties owned or acquired (OPOA) (for banks' non-performing assets that stood at P440.10 billion as November, up from P446.35 billion a month ago and P430.19 billion a year ago.

Even with the increasing level of NPAs, the 40th consecutive month that the ratio stood at 15.04 percent from 12.39 percent due to the 1.0-percent improvement in total assets.

The coverage ratio went down to 67.0 percentage points to 69.08 percent for NPLs, and to 67.17 percent to 71.22 percent for NPAs, indicating that banks have been sensitive to over-provision.

The banks' NPL ratio rose to a high of 18.81 percent in October 2001, from a single-digit level before the 1997 Asian crisis.

The central bank is hopeful that multilateral agencies such as the Asian Development Bank and the International Finance Corp. would help facilitate the sale of the banking sector's non-performing assets.

The ADB said the IFC was talking with asset management companies to purchase bad loans to bridge the pricing gap that had dogged the sale of NPLs and related assets.

The BSP was hoping that since the ADB and the IFC acquired (in a more reasonable rate of return, then it could devise schemes such as asset management to encourage the private offices of banks to their bad loans and related assets.

MRT-7 plan endorsed

By Doris C. Dumlao

LIBERIAN LRT Corp., the consortium that proposed the P12-billion mass railway transit system to serve the Novaliches-Quezon City (also called MRT-7, has obtained the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee's "first-pass" approval for its unsolicited proposal, the National Economic Development Authority said yesterday.

Two years after the proposal was first presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the ICC-technical working group has agreed to endorse the project to the ICC-Cabinet Committee for final affirmation and approval.

"MRT 7 is supposed to provide a more efficient, safer and cyber friendly mode of passenger transportation along Commonwealth Avenue and alleviate traffic conditions there. It will serve commuters to and from the north of Metro Manila, including Novaliches, Fairview, Caloocan and Quezon City," the NEDA said in a statement yesterday.

As a condition, the ICC required the proponents to submit evidence on the performance of the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law and the unsolicitedness of the financial facilities to the national government.

The ICC-technical board also ordered the proponents to further improve the cost-revenue efficiency of the project, to negotiate for the best financial terms from the lenders and equity shareholders as well as to undertake a more extensive rate of return study.

The project involves the construction of a light rail transit system starting from Sta. Cruz in Caloocan City North, passing through Lagro, Fairview, Commonwealth, Batasan, Sandiganbayan, Quezon City Hall

Mining industry expects $4.5B in new investments

By Michelle V. Rosca

INVESTMENTS Us of at least $4.5 billion are expected to pour into the mining industry following the government's policy shift from reliance on production of low-grade nickel to the ore, which used to be one of the country's biggest dollar earners.

According to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (CMP), the more welcoming business environment ushered in by the signing of Executive Order No. 270 or the National Minerals Policy may entice foreign investors to come back to the Philippines, thus, bringing back the industry's lost luster.

The CMP estimated that the initial investments of $4.5 billion would bring in roughly $1.5 billion in export revenue in about four years' time.

The mining sector currently rakes only $500 million in exports a year, a far cry from the $1.2 billion that the industry generated in the 1980s when the Philippines was one of the world's biggest mineral exporters.

CMP president Benjamin Philip Romualdez, who also sits as president and chief executive officer of Benguet Corp., said the policy shift came at the right time as prices of minerals like gold and copper are at their highest.

"There is an opening in mineral prices, with gold recently reaching $430/oz ounce. We hope we can take advantage so that we don't miss the boat," said Romualdez in a press briefing.

Romualdez added that it was crucial to allow full foreign participation in mining projects because of the huge capital needed to pursue exploration activities.

He said at least $50 million is required just to start exploration, and another $500 million to $1 billion to begin actual mining operations.

"Mining requires big risk capital and I don't know if there are enough Filipinos who can afford to risk such amount of capital, "he said.

Romualdez said the industry was confident that the new administration would pursue the new mining policy initiated by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

After three years of prodding by the mining sector, Romualdez said the government has finally realized the vast potential of promoting the mining industry.

He added that the industry was also confident that the Supreme Court would soon decide on the constitutionality of the Mining Act of 1995.

He said the industry was optimistic that The Supreme Court would issue a ruling in favor of the mining industry.

The Mining Act allows wholly-owned foreign firms to explore for minerals under a financial technical assistance agreement.

Petron to put up subsidiary to operate service stations

By Raoul W. Dominguez

Oil, giant Petron Corp. yesterday said it was putting up a subsidiary ... Petron Marketing Corp. (PMC)—that would allow it to operate company-owned service stations.

Petron public affairs manager Virginia Barcelon said the Board of Investments approved late last year the firm's application to establish a retail business under the Retail Trade Liberalization Act of 2000.

Before that, Petron was not allowed to engage in direct retailing, being just by foreign control.

Barcelon said Petron expects that company-owned, company-operated service stations would play a major part in launching market initiatives to strengthen the Petron brand.

"Our stations would not only promote the Petron brand and image but would also give us an opportunity to quickly introduce innovations beyond the present services that are available in our stations," she said.

The official added that putting up its own stations would allow Petron to capture other revenue streams, including food and other customer products as well as direct franchising of quick service restaurants.

"This is in line with our thrust to capture more of the retail market," Barcelon said.

She added that once PMC is incorporated, it would begin putting up 30 new service stations to strengthen sites over a five-year period.

Petron currently has 1,300 dealer-owned stations nationwide.

Petron likewise recently established a separate subsidiary called Petron Texas dollar Inc. to operate its "mega station" at the Subic Bay freeport.

The 2,200 square-meter service station, which is expected to be operational by the middle of this year, will be offering a complete range of fuel products as well as retail and service bays.

SC rules against NTC's plan to change mobile call billing

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SUPREME Court has dowsed with finality a motion seeking to change the way cellular phone calls are billed, from per minute to per six-second pulse.

In a one-page decision issued on June 12, 2003, the high tribunal reiterated that the National Telecommunications Commission should not implement a billing system in pulses of almost one year ago, after compelled cellular service providers to change the way they bill their subscribers' calls.

Acting on the motion of respondent National Telecommunications Commission, the reconsideration of the decision of Aug. 12, 2003 and considering that the basic issues have already been passed upon and there is no substantial argument to warrant a modification of this court's decision, the court resolves to deny consideration with finality" the order stated.

Memorandum Circular 13-8-2000 would have changed the method used for billing cellular phone calls from the current per-minute charging to a per six-second pulse.

Local cellular service providers opposed the implementation of the circular on grounds that it would entail additional costs.

The circular also sought to extend the validity period of all subscriber identification module (SIM) packs to seven years from date of first use.

This means that even without reloading fresh prepaid credits into an account, a SIM card will remain active for five years.

The validity period of prepaid phone cards will likewise be jacked up from the current two-month period to two years.

Cellular service providers say the extended period would be too much of a burden as they would have to maintain dormant accounts without recovering their investments.

Following the Supreme Court decision, dominant cellular service providers Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. and their respective subsidiaries Philippine Telephone Corp. and Innove Communications Inc. can pursue the case until the courts deem the circular null and void.

Atlas barred from pursuing new exploration projects

By Cristine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources is not inclined to issue any new mining permits to Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. until it cleans up its abandoned mines.

"The DENR is bent on not allowing the company to resume operations unless it complies with the environmental requirements and conditions," said Mines and Geosciences Bureau director Leo Jasareno in an interview yesterday.

The DENR said in a report that Atlas' 600-hectare Toledo copper mine in Cebu spewed acidic mine tailings into the Bapanglahin River.

Jasareno said the DENR sanctioned Atlas upon the discovery of the mine tailings.

The government agency also suspended the processing of the company's application to renew its ore leases.

The DENR's decision put a monkey wrench into the company's plans to seek new partners and push through with the reopening of the shuttered Toledo copper mine in Cebu.

The rehabilitation of the Toledo mine has proved to cost about $94 million.

In its 29 years of operation, the Toledo mine produced 667 million tons of ore.

The mine has about 881 million metric tons of recoverable reserves containing 7.8 billion pounds of copper and 5 million ounces of gold.

Atlas Consolidated plans to diversify into non-mining businesses, including construction, and a possible e-commerce venture in China.

Atlas used to be one of the country's largest copper producing companies along with Philex Mining Corp.

In 1996, a local group, Minero Mining and Exploration Corp., agreed on a debt-for-equity swap agreement to rehabilitate and reopen Toledo but have withdrew when the Asian currency crisis struck in 1997.

DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun recently inspected the Toledo mine in an effort to get first-hand information on the conditions of the mine.

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LIFESTYLE Home

Larrie Silva on his own

The former Rustan's designer goes on a sabbatical and simplifies his life and space

Text by Alix T. Vergara
Photos by Cino Nuava

FASHION designer Larrie Silva has started the year right. Because he wanted to simplify his lifestyle, he gave up his three-bedroom house in Ayala Alabang last year in favor of a one-bedroom unit in Greenhills.

Silva, who first made a name for himself in one of Rustan's top in-house designers, recently moved to his new home, an advanced-size, one-bedroom abode with a sweeping view of the metropolis, after nearly five months of supervising its renovation.

To achieve his vision in white, he tapped the services of good friend Rudy Luyong. Luyong, in turn, assigned the project to architect Ilmi Alfonso.

But why the big move to a smaller space?

"We all go through various phases in our lives," says Silva, who is currently on a sabbatical from designing. "The house [in Alabang] was also all there because I did a great deal of entertaining. It only makes sense to move to a smaller home since I

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Larrie Silva on his own

A PAIR of bar stools in gold and copper by Lim Cui-ching reveals the fashion designer of the tactile bird of textiles. Pendant lights are strategically placed, imparting a drama on the ground floor.

PDG chair by Philippe Starck and leather chaise lounge by Antonio Citterio occupy an area illuminated by indirect lighting. Behind the wall is the small kitchen.

To new page C3

that alone."

Built living room and dining area share one big space. Pineda had to move back the wall separating the kitchen from the unit's public area to give Silva and his guests more breathing space. The architect turned out a modest space for the unit's quarters in a corner of the small kitchen.

"Anyway," says Silva as he walked us through the kitchen. "I don't need a big kitchen since I hardly cook and have big pantry arrangements."

Aside from adding himself of unwanted clutter, the move enabled Silva to cut down on household expenses. While no more gas-down-the-sink, he let go of the cook, too. The driver's services also became superfluous, as he has chosen to drive himself around the metropolis. By 2pm, however, kept his rostered God Friday-ahem, bond with him for 12 years.

No-horror

Not that Silva has decided to live like a hermit. Apart from the sleek, creature comforts found in his new home—from the supple leather bed to the freestanding bathtub by Philippe Starck—the unit was comfortably host a party of four to six people. He says he'd like there are enough movable chairs to supplement the four armchairs and chaise lounge made of leather in the living room.

But before Silva could start shopping for new home items, he and Pineda had to redefine a number of elements that come with the old unit to reflect its new owner's needs and lifestyle. Despite having had no formal training in architecture and interior design, Silva's creativity exhibits more power to the force.

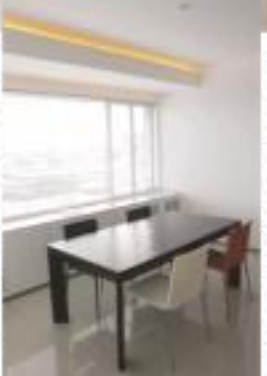
"We all have the creative power to transform a space as the occasion calls for it," he says.

The former antiquarian, he assumes, had to go in favor of a floor made from a series of three off-white granite tiles. The pair were free to contrast by using smaller pieces of shiny but black granite tiles in the bathroom.

Silva also had the ceiling raised by almost a foot. The old ceiling had a spot that passed directly above a picture window by the dining area. When Pineda learned that the unsightly element was limited within the area, he sought Silva's go-signal for him to order a larger portion of the ceiling.

"He worked around the pipe by concealing it," says Silva, as he points to the cove lighting. "I find it so relaxing to look at. Isn't it beautiful?"

Not only did Pineda replace the conventional wooden door leading to the bedroom with a sliding one made of frosted glass, he also ensured the door's frame or jamb is merging with the chromed ceiling. To achieve symmetry and perhaps an illusion of uncanny lavishness, Gil et had an identical sliding door leading to the same space built in the opposite end of the wall.



$24 all-purpose storage-finished cable-with-chromium-metal legs Silva himself designed is paired with marble chairs in glacier and aluminum by Richard Sapper.

BATHTUB and bathroom fixtures by Philippe Starck

Vistas

Silva says there lost a garden, but he has gained breathtaking vistas of Metro Manila and beyond. The Eastern School campus and beyond it the Makati skyline can be seen from a picture window by the dining area. A similar window by the bedroom offers a panoramic view of Quezon City and parts of Marikina and Antipolo.

To ward off the sun from the streets below, Silva had to modify the picture windows by relanding their outer and replacing them with thicker sheets of glass. Ida and Pineda also tinkered with the baseboards by using aluminum sheets in lieu of paint. Even the switches and sockets are framed in aluminum.

With the major renovation over and done with, Silva went shopping for furniture pieces mostly from IKEA Tiida. At his insistence, the series of shower has which by Jim Cutting and Sylvain Artal, Water Gal—found in the living room are decidedly organic and in keeping with the unit's modern and minimalist theme.

"The only round objects in the living room are the chairs' tubular concrete and legs," says Silva.

Despite the downscaling, Silva didn't scrimp on the basics. His bamboo bed, which, he says, is not to be confused with a duvet, is probably the dream one can get to sleeping on clouds. Unlike a duvet or comforter, which can double as a thick, warm blanket, a feather bed is a bed in itself that fits between the mattress and the bottom sheet.

"A feather bed is neither a duvet nor a comforter," he explains. "No loss of stuffing, a feather bed in Silva's unit—down, the softest, fluffiest part of a feather."

Silva also knows how to pamper himself by choosing the best bathroom fixtures from Philippe Starck. Thus, not only the soaking tub and plumbing fixtures have been designed by the famed French designer, even the toilet bowl can't be for mere.

"We all deserve to pause and enjoy the fruits of our labor," he concurs.

E-mail the author at yen.perez@inquirer.com.ph

CAMPUS view, and beyond it the Makati skyline

Repair holiday-ravaged skin

PEOPLE are still recovering from the abuse their skin went through over the holidays. It happens every year—when December comes, people drop out of the gym, eat unhealthily or in excess, party every day with little or no sleep till New Year's Day.

Then everyone calls, texts or e-mails me to panic because one's skin looks hideous while there are still runs of wedding and Chinese New Year parties on around. When you mention 'dermaroller', they let out shrieks of pain.

Well, I was also guilty as charged! To get my skin back in shape, it needed a lot of help.

Microdermabrasion. The fastest way to get your skin back in shape is to have several of these sessions offered at dermatologists' clinics or aesthetical facial centres. One session shows a big difference with no downtime.

You can head straight to a party right after the procedure and be certain of getting compliments for your porcelain mane and smooth skin with pale pink cheeks.

The procedure exfoliates dead skin cells to give way to new, smooth, even-toned and soft baby skin. People who will benefit greatly are those with: 1. dull, oily or leathery skin, and 2. enlarged pores due to aging or active oil production.

So the sebaceous pores, the prominent orifices and exercise-clogged pores. It will eliminate **mild acne and mild pigment irregularities** (light freckles and age spots).

In addition, it will enhance the performance of your beauty products because the active ingredients will penetrate deeper into the skin.

Procedure: Using sterile micro crystals, the surface of the skin is gently exfoliated **without anesthesia** by moving a hand piece across the skin, while delivering a precise stream of crystals onto the skin's surface. Suction is then applied to lift the crystals as well as flaky dead skin and reveal fresh, invigorated skin.

ESTEE Lauder Idealist Micro-D

What the procedure is called and where to go:

Diamond Peel—Gives a whole new meaning to looking like a million bucks as the crystals used are actual tiny diamonds. The diamonds are reused but sterilised. This is ideal, in my opinion, for those with more sensitive skin that is relatively smooth. They often dread even the mildest skincare action.

I had mine at Pantai Cure Centre for RM1,000. The accompanying collagen facial cost RM1,200. The procedure is also done by dermatologists in hospitals like Dr Mahani Skinfinal Centre.

Power Lido Stones, Magic Stick—Cosmedix exotic crystals are used only once and thrown away afterward. This type is more advisable for people with other skin and tougher concerns as it takes out more dead skin and pore-clogging comedones. But those with sensitive skin might find it a bit harsh. Those with acne-type or high tolerance for pain can safely it painless. Cost: RM,500 at Salix Med and Meridin Clinic.

Microdermabrasion should be done once a week or once every two weeks to give skin time to renew itself. Doing it too often will result only in overly sensitive skin that will feel raw or become prone to broken capillaries and redness.

Do-it-yourself products

If you are abroad whose procedures are cost just an arm and a leg, or if you simply have no time to visit a facial centre or clinic, there are do-it-yourself products to help you maintain "the look," which you have grown accustomed to.

Estee Lauder Idealist Micro-D (P2,900)—Takes only two minutes of your time. After cleansing your face, put a small amount on your palm and massage on your face for one minute. You will feel a warm, tingly sensation that opens pores and lifts off comedones. Rinse off and apply toner and moisturiser. Recommended for use once or twice a week depending on your skin's condition. Lasts for about 20 or so treatments.

Prescriptives Dermapolish System (P6,000)—A whole kit with a timer and accessories. This is closest to the real thing and definitely more abrasive with soothing products included for post-treatment. Read instructions carefully. Recommended once a week or every two weeks.

Estee Lauder and Prescriptives are available exclusively at Watsons.

E-mail the author at beautyeditor@thestar.com.my

RIGHT side treated with Microdermabrasion

PRESCRIPTIVES Dermapolish System

INQUIRER promotions and CSD Sandy Bermudez relaxes any reservations, naturally

THE GANG: L'Oreal's Angelique Villarosa with top young counselor Mimi Eala, beauty queen Miriam Quiambao and mega business mover and shaker Joel Ong

ADMIRERS of beauty: Butch San Agustin and Dodo Vaca

THE FASHION princess and the makeup prince: Jenni Sparrow and Patrick Ronas

Oh, what a Paradis it seems!

THE BEAUTY and the hosts: Shu Uemura brand manager Tina Theis and visiting chief makeup artist from Japan, good looking and talented Kabuyama Uchida

PREVIEW gals Isha Andaya and Agnes Rangroo

FORMER showbiz actress Cristina Gonzales Bermudez with former top model Rita Ortiz

VICKY Zulueta

IN DEMAND babes: Fashionistas Joyce Oreña and Shu Uemura Philippine chief makeup artist Xeng Zulueta

CHIT Salud with Eric Aquino and Gina Salud Rodriguez

SOCIALITE Mary Anne Rosalie Chan with Nestor's associates Vida Estrada and attractive Brazilian belle Mona Santana

SULTANA'S top boss Ina Reis Tantoco and Marilee Tantoco Yulienne with Chiechie Madrigal and husband Mandy Estapia

HOTSHOTS of La Mer: Elaine Wong, Nestor's Rhoda Campos, Robert and Annie Kuk, with Kim Eong Liew

BABES of the night - Dipali Ojwaul, Mia Borromeo, Patsy Zobel Hollins, Christina Brodner and her sister Barbara Abrahn

YOUNG achievers: Cricket Tantoco with Ernie Lopez, Lance and Jay Gokongwei, and Dennis Tantoco

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Mauricio Arruejo

Photos by Alexi Van Hagen on Rodish Mau

SIX women, that world-renowned Japanese cosmetic brand whose products have found their way into most women's hearts, has given the girls something new to talk about. It brought to the country the brand's international chief makeup artist, Kabuyama Uchida, to preview the Shiseido's Spring/Summer Resplendency collection for 2004. The collection is appropriately called "Paradise".

The good-looking Kabuyama Uchida was handpicked by the Japanese 10 years ago to train under the makeup master himself and eventually be his representative for the brand internationally. Ten years later, perhaps, Kabuyama is remains the Uemura's sole protege, he is also the leader of the dashing team (the brand's team of fledgling makeup artists). Kabuyama U's talent for making beauty tutorials are a reputation well-earned.

The hardworking local club rah-rah girls of the Uemura—brand manager Tina Theis and chief makeup artist Rang Jiabaera—got together a series of events for them, fabulous and industry-makers.

A cocktail party at the popular Restaurant 12 is its debut. It was attended by celebrities such as Celine Lopez, Patrick Gerpen, Blanca Quiambao, Irene Ortiña, Jenni Sparrow, Ashton Saavedra, Kim Rivera and his wife Pele Rivera, Rhett Eala, Christian del Gallego, DJ Montano, Bonnie Primero, Ipe Cruz and Wynna Sison.

Also there were the Uemura Internationals's Hidekazu Suzuki and Hiroki Nakajima and three Paul Ubort Duillet and Lotus Garpo, Carole Galayon of Luxury Division, and Angelique Villanueva. The atmosphere was casual and fun, thanks to the endless flow of booze and yummy food, which had us all energized to party just our bedtime...dahlings.

The women were treated to an intensive makeup workshop at Shiseido is to exhibit 2-day next day where Kabuyama U. presented Paradis.

Inspired by the Asian legend, the Paradis presentation consisted of 16 images such as flowers blooming, rays of sunshine sprinkling dewdrop overhead and the sound of birds filling the air.

The models' faces became canvases for the colors of Paradis. It was definitely a collection that promises tons of good vibes in 2004!

You may try Paradis' packages at the Uemura's Makati and Tower (Shangri-La Plaza).

Miracle cream

If there is anything that can get Cosme Shiseido's creation of the cream out for a night, it will be Crème de la Mer, the world famous anti-aging cream that makes the skin look and feel young again, would you believe, palengke?

Crème de la Mer was launched in 1965 to an exclusive dinner hosted by Rita Tantoco, president of Isetann Commercial Corp., and his brother's wife, Nena, at the sprawling, well-manicured garden of the famous residence.

Heading the pack was the managing director of Este Lauder Malaysia, Robert Kuk, and his wife Annie. They were treated to a scrumptuous dinner prepared by Gabie Boots. Guests prepared a super special menu using the best ingredients of La Mer, which included sea bass, alfalfa, raspberries and cauliflower.

During dessert, Kuk C. and Robert K. unveiled a 5 ft tall aquarium, which displayed a floating Crème de la Mer jar surrounded by star fish and corals.

All the while musical director Ryan Cayabyab played on the grand piano the French song "La Mer," paraphrase.

In his welcome speech, Rita T. emphasized that "though Crème de la Mer has been long in existing, it is certainly worth the wait," which brought applause from the women who all looked younger than their true age, all because they had been using this "wonder cream" for ages.

Looking around, me noticed that three or four of the invitees should start using this cream, or go to their favorite plastic surgeon because they looked like Barbie dolls with their thick makeup. Dingdong.

But the best remark I heard that night was from three 20-something fashionistas discussing politics. One of them asked the other, "Hoy! Is all these beautiful girls around here what do you consider the most interesting thing besides your business empire?"

"When I'm out to, or with, a beautiful girl, I don't give a damn about business or my wife," the other guy answered, laughing. And hey, would you believe, his wife was just on arm's length away from him, chatting with another guest! Uh, well.

Home LIFESTYLE

COLLAR (left) and bracelets by Wyeth Wyeth Ong

Year of style-defining accessories

SOME mornings, while dressing for the day's kick-butt schedule, you find yourself thinking backwards, style-wise that is.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

You're thinking what dress to wear to show off your trinkets or bangles and brooches, instead of the other way around. Slice change. Those colorful crystals, stones and beads, the manonokis, the costume gloves in the "Stargate," are good partner-ups on an otherwise boring day. These days, it's not drastic fashion that women are using to make their style statement or to pull surprises. It's the accessories.

As in the last few years, this year will be big on accessories. Girls are accessorizing up—a pendulum swing away from years of minimum or even sheer accessories. The direction rules an fashion's return to dress-up glamour and feminine supple silhouettes.

What also pushes women in this style direction is the bewildering array of accessories available and their sources and makers. Beyond the brands and boutiques, you know at least one woman who's into bringing beads, stones and crystals and selling them. It's a spillover from the New Age chic's gone mad: dreads or turbo-head content, they gone "bangs-chic." Even Kenna Sandoro has designed crystals (you guess for love, silver or gems for self-esteem and wealth, amulet for good luck) into bracelets and necklaces she gets as holiday gifts.

Jewelry care 101

THE DEBBIE is for beautiful items in every human being, most especially the female of the species. Women spend unbounded amounts on beauty products and the most fashionable items to find and look their best. But those who are more astute invest in jewelry pieces that can instantly add a touch of class to any ensemble.

This being the case, it is but practical to know how to maintain and care for one's jewelry. But only will this ensure you a lifetime of pleasurable use, it will also help in the preservation of your assets so that you may pass them on to your grandchildren in style.

PSI, a jewelry boutique in Power Plant Mall, has a simple and practical approach to the maintenance of diamonds, gemstones and gold jewelry, the main thrust of which is to guard against chemical attacks and thermal shocks.

PSI's in-house gemologist strongly suggests that you keep your pieces in separate pockets to prevent scratching. This is the same advice offered by Anita Chan Jewelry, also located in Power Plant Mall, which recommends the use of a compartmentalized jewelry box or even old-fashioned chocolate boxes, which have removable trays.

When cleaning your jewelry pieces, use Connoisseur's Jewelry Cleaner, which are gentle, non-abrasive and available for diamonds, pearls and delicate jewelry such as gemstones.

All you have to do is dip your pieces one at a time for 10-15 minutes per piece. Then, simply brush, rinse thoroughly and dry unless has been done. If you are pressed for time, there are also easy-to-use, jewelry-friendly Town Talk Polish Cloths for Jewellery duties, which you may use to clean your jadeite and other pieces.

POLISH your silver jewelry with Town Talk's **unique and treated-friendly silver polishing cloth. Available at Jasmin' Cuero in the Power Plant Mall and Glorietta.**

APPLES' PICKINGS

Applea Abrera-Schifferstein

Ultrasonic cleaners (those that you see usually use in home TV shopping channels) are not highly recommended by PSI's gemologists, as these may give gemstones thermal shock and thus weaken the stone. Nor does she recommend the use of detergents and toothpaste, which have mild abrasive qualities.

Anita Chan Jewelry, on the other hand, recommends the use of hot water and an ammonia-based cleaner for intricate pieces, and gentle brush-cleaning for more delicate pieces.

Separate compartment

Anushara Subramaniam, the business proficiency of South Sea pearls in the Philippines, emphasizes that pearls deserve their own separate compartment to stop scratches and breakage.

Never mix them with other jewelry to keep them from rubbing against rough surfaces and hard substances such as gold, diamonds, sapphires and the like.

When storing pearls, keep them in an atmosphere with some moisture. Don't put them in an airtight safe or compartment, unless you keep a glass of water to provide some moisture.

To clean pearls, simply wipe them regularly with a soft, damp cloth. Jewellery does not recommend steam-cleaning or ultrasonic cleaning for pearls. Also, never use pearls when swimming, using a shower or doing any sort of cleaning.

WHEN cleaning fine jewelry, use Connoisseurs Jewelry Cleaner, which are gentle, non-abrasive and available for diamonds, pearls and delicate jewelry such as gemstones. If you are pressed for time, Town Talk's Jewellery Cloth is the perfect tool for a quick once-over. Available at PSI, in the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell.

Keep in mind that good quality pearls should be re-strung once a year if worn regularly. A silk cord is generally preferred over a synthetic one, as the latter tends to stretch over time. Plus, dirt and oil travel down the cord from one pearl to another when they touch.

Also, take knotting, which serves two important functions, into consideration. Firstly, it keeps pearls from rubbing and scratching against each other. Secondly, should the strand break, it will prevent the pearls from being all over the place.

The more you wear your pearls, the more luscious they become. It is a fact that pearls thrive on contact with human skin. Hence, precious gemstones are not meant to be locked away.

Anushara, PSI and Anita Chan Jewelry all recommend that you store your jewelry after you've applied your perfume, hair spray, makeup, body lotion and the like. Watch are especially sensitive to acids and powerful chemicals.

It's also best to take your pieces off the moment you get home and before you clean up or shower.

To avoid loose, make sure you put your pieces in one place after you remove them and wear some to wear papers which might be unwittingly thrown out.

If you remove your ring when washing your hands, never leave it on a counter top. Instead, take it so you don't forget to wear it again.

Source, Royal Palace and Cues by Anushara

Email the author at opeabrera@yahoo.com

Gemstones to awaken the senses

SATELLITE. thin spider, pearl knit of a brooch at Pan St. Bonard, now brings to-edge and lure of exquisite accessories and perfume to Manila at Forma Greenbelt 3.

Satellite had its beginnings in 1986 when Sandrine Bolina, a young silversmith, was traveling around the world with David Jewel Outlet. She wanted to distinguish antique jewelry pieces from materials like gemstones. Now

BROOCH of crystals, semi-precious stones and gold beads set in antique-finished silver, from the 2004 Spectacular collection.

BRACELET of crystals, pearls, silver and gold beads

EARRINGS of crystals, pearls, silver and gold beads

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Concept, Styling and Direction by:

Henry Pascual

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Year of style-defining accessories

From page C1

The return to accessories—and to making them—is one of the best things to happen to Filipino women. It's a golden business opportunity that means that women of any and the aesthetics sense. Rich or poor, young or old, Filipinas are artistic and highly creative—a trend manifesting itself, humbly or colossally, in scraping, drawing, acting, or in the various manners of wrapping. This strength, therefore, is set to spur with the fashion direction, and the market demand it spurred. It empowers the Filipino to carve independent artistry.

The one work out of her home while looking after the kids. I know so many women who are finding jewelry. Chique Rodriguez Tuki has turned out vintage-looking trinkets from unique beads and crystals, as she looks after kids, husband and dogs. No sense fear is that of a young lid since homework; Jho Santos has discovered she can make crystal, semi-precious and bead jewels in the colors she likes—for the longest time without a "you" and household.

An underground economy is enjoying a boom out there, without help from grocers, retail and eventually defying the foreign index that continues to strangulate the Philippine rating.

Tips

Now, how do you make the beauty for accessorizing work for you?

The key is elegance—yes, even with "vintage" finds. Celebrate the discerning eye that will turn the commonplace into show-stopping, the trendy into something timeless and classic. The Augusta find into something showy and tasteful. How?

• Select. Look beyond the tons of beads, crystals and colorful drums. Wisely. I don't know of any woman who hasn't bought one or two such trinkets and necklaces in the "vintage." The twinkle and glitter of those stones under the yellow light are just too much to resist. But never give in to the temptation to depart from the common. You've had enough flow Age energy from such stones to last you through two long years and centuries of love lines. To select more than a few quarts to bag is nonsense. The ratio of bracelets worn to

A pendulum's swing away from eons of minimalism, women are up to here with crystals and beads and propping up à de facto economy

pairs is just too lopsided in favor of the latter.)

• Color determining: earning clean, quiet hue that sets off the stone or crystal. A thoroughly ethnic accessory is hard to blend with corporate wear.

No visual traffic on your neck is welcome, please, as you try to impress your boss with the bobwithine. Huge beads and shells look better on boutique racks than on the hollow dress skin. Reserve up your sense to be effective. Stones and crystals look elegant if they're strung on chain and—matte silver, gold or copper—according to how they appear finally. Matte, gold and silver are kicks in the "less of the Modern; the monkey's elsewhere for big metal. Choose matte—in short, minimalist medium chill. Do the social best thing to unveil it is unembellished black thread, very leather.

• Go for collage. If the "vintage" is worth its space, it should yield vintage finds. These are stunningly exercise settings or accessories—agnus in "old" looking silver or other metal that sets off the stones and crystals I use "seemingly," because, in fact, these must be ready-made scenes you homemaker-turned-jeweler traps by the bulk and strings together with his crystals and beads. Neither higher than the "vintage" are small boutiques with exotic goods that include vintage stuff from Europe. Asia is the US.

Among my style kicklies is a necklace from Mexico made of fine tree silver and turquoise. It's reliable in that it's the only touch I need to wear with a silk shirt to make me look as if I was in the newest collection my friend at Intl Dad only snatched it to be in real destructive.

• Think geometric—defined lines and shapes—and sculpture. It is metal or wire bent and then into a mesh, in a series of circles, or any order of concentration and disorder. If, seeing fashion accessories in excellent of the art designers Nonoy Wyne Ong, Jun Dimaisuan (the furniture designer known for his semi chairs who's making fashion accessories out of leaves and twigs dipped in silver) and Anna Llanos, the model who's also accessory design mom. With such high fashion accessories, you cannot just create your own style which should just serve as simple backdrop for style-defining accessories. Like a clean empty canvas awaiting the wild strokes of art.

• Think texture. Go beyond the conventional, into the unconventional spaces into which are striking not only for how they look but also how they feel to the touch. Today's accessory makers and jewelers are doing wonders with resin, for instance. They give the illusion of the texture of the outdoors.

At the Palms Country Club gift shop I had an accidental find—a resin necklace which looks like a string of leaves, they color in between rusty coffee and orange. The texture is so rough, which makes it chic. This design is repeated in another necklace—this time in black and white, with dangling black beads in accent. The ingenious woman I gave it to wore it to bracelet, which made it look torn off the store. I'm still living in awe the accessory designer.

Still on resin, last Monday, the F. Jhun Flower dragged us to the opening of Hyun jewelry store just across the office and there, we found displayed, among the metals featuring diamond and precious stones jewelry, huge resin cuffs, rings and necklaces. Still being the new Black, but accentuated a little red resin cuff embedded with diamonds. There's also a dark resin necklace—transparent and open except for turquoise stone in the middle. Perfect for a bathroom's dress.

• Bead it. Remains the classic accessory. You must never forget that. "Vintage" or no "vintage," Audrey Hepburn lives on.

• At night, coax on the glitter. Glam up with those long things. The best electronics not the end of the world.